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# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

## **Monterey, California**



## **THESIS**

**INTERVENTION IN AFRICA: ASSESSING THE  
RATIONALE BEHIND SUB-REGIONAL PEACEMAKING  
MILITARY INTERVENTIONS**

by

Alfred K. Mashishi

March 2003

Thesis Co-Advisors

Letitia Lawson  
Jeff Knopf

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**INTERVENTION IN AFRICA: ASSESSING THE RATIONALE BEHIND SUB-  
REGIONAL PEACEMAKING MILITARY INTERVENTION**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND CIVIL-MILITARY  
RELATIONS**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines factors that are more likely to lead to peacemaking military intervention by a sub-regional hegemon in Africa. It seeks to answer the question of what motivates the sub-regional hegemons to undertake peacemaking military intervention in Africa. It argues that the emerging model of African peacemaking military intervention depends on a sub-regional hegemon's decision to intervene because of its ability to provide necessary resources needed for such operation. Hence, the sub-regional hegemon will conduct peacemaking military intervention when, where and if it suits its interest. The conclusion reached by this thesis is that self-regarding peacemaking intervention by sub-regional hegemon is effective in resolving conflicts in Africa



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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

AFDL:	Alliance of Democratic for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire
AFL:	Armed Forces of Liberia
BDF:	Botswana Defense Force
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOMOG:	ECOWAS Monitoring Group
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
ISDSC:	Inter State Defense Security Council
LDC:	Liberal Congress for Democracy
MAD:	Mutual Assistance on Matters of Defense
NPFL:	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
OAU:	Organization of African Unity
SADCC:	Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
SANDF:	Southern African National Defense Force
SMC:	Standing Mediation Committee
UN:	United Nations
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees
WEU:	Western European Union

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. BACKGROUND**

At the dawn of the 1990s, the world witnessed momentous changes. Africa was not immune to these dramatic shifts in the economic and political order.<sup>1</sup> The end of the Cold War had a major impact on the continent of Africa, including a significant increase in peacekeeping interventions. What made these military interventions special was that they were carried out by African states, under the auspices of sub-regional organizations. This marked a departure from traditional military interventions in Africa, which had been conducted by foreign powers with ties to the African state in question. Since the end of the Cold War, major Western powers are increasingly reluctant to become embroiled in military intervention beyond the confines of their geographical and national interest.<sup>2</sup> This anti-intervention mood has even led major powers, especially the United States, to discourage action at the global level, because it feared being later called upon to reinforce United Nations (UN) operations.<sup>3</sup> Thus, recent interventions by African countries have necessitated international withdrawal.

This new type of sub-regional peacemaking intervention presents a number of challenges, not least of which is the apparent violation of the international legal principle of non-interference in the affairs of sovereign states. This principle is a prominent feature in the charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).<sup>4</sup>

On a more practical level, these interventions have been conducted by sub-regional organizations whose mandates, until recently, were limited to promoting

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<sup>1</sup> Edmond Keller, "Introduction: Toward a New African Political Order" in Edmond J. Keller and Donald Rothchild, *Africa in the New International Order: Rethinking State Sovereignty* (Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), p 1

<sup>2</sup> Anton du Plessis, "Military Intervention: Nature and Scope" in Leone du Plessis and Michael Hough, *Managing African Conflicts: The Challenge of Military Intervention* (HSRC Publishers: Pretoria, South Africa, 2000), p 19

<sup>3</sup> Falk, R., "Post-Cold War Illusions and Daunting Realities" in Williamson, R (ed) *Some Corner of a Foreign Fields: Intervention and World Order* (Houdmills, 1998), p 144

<sup>4</sup> OAU has been recently replaced by the new formation of the African Union that was launched in 2002. This new organization deals differently with the issue of non-interference vis-à-vis OUA.



regional economic cooperation and integration. These organizations are themselves weak, lacking in peacemaking experience and financial resources. This weakness is reflected in the absence of structures that specifically deal with intrastate conflict, not an issue of concern to these organizations. Mainly, the available structures were built around the possibility of a state to state conflict.

The proliferation of conflicts within the domestic realms of the member states in some sub-regions has increased at a fast rate and thus can no longer be avoided by all those concerned within those sub-regions. These kinds of conflicts, particularly in Africa, have a tendency to affect domestic relations of other states within the sub-region. This cascading effect ultimately may lead to disruption and dislocation of all states and people's relations within the sub-region.

Initiatives to deal with this type of carnage required all the member states to recognize that civil war in one state means trouble for other states in the sub-region thus to contemplate of conducting a peacemaking mechanism dedicated to ending such conflicts. However, this kind of mission needs a substantial contribution of resources from the member states themselves rather than from the external actors, who are not directly impacted by the conflicts. Nevertheless, there is a mood of introspection in Africa today and a growing resolve to find effective African solutions to African problems, including achieving peace and stability through conflict resolution.

Recognizing that sub-regional solutions must be found in the absence of international engagement extends beyond the peacekeeper to the potentially peacekept. In two of the three cases to be examined in this thesis, namely Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the initial requests for assistance were directed to historical patrons and/or the international community. Both requests were followed by demurrals, first by the US declaring that its interest at that moment was focused on the Persian Gulf region. This declaration was confirmed when the US, even though it had about 2000 Marines stationed off the coast of Liberia, refused to move in and separate the warring factions. Second, from the international perspective, the then UN Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar, categorically stated that the UN would not intervene. "Meanwhile, as the world looked on and passed the buck more and more

Liberians were dying and starving.”<sup>5</sup> The international community showed little interest in resolving the conflict in Liberia.

The refusal of these requests sent a clear signal that international patrons could no longer be called upon to rescue of their African clients and that the international community lacked the ability, if not the will, to respond in the absence of major power support. African leaders, historically reluctant to call upon neighbors for assistance, feared that such interventions would be driven by the interests of the interveners. Additionally, the avoidance of seeking assistance from neighboring countries may be attributed to the knowledge that they do not have any significant resources required to make effective contribution. This lack of resources could ultimately lead to neighboring countries refusing point blank to offer assistance.

However, lacking viable alternatives, the leaders of Lesotho, Democratic Republic of Congo and Liberia (the conflict-prone countries) each requested assistance from its sub-regional organization. Interestingly, these leaders did not even bother to consult the OAU, then the regional security body, but solicited sub-regional economic bodies for assistance. The reason for avoiding the regional organization can be attributed to OAU conflict resolution mechanisms that were based on non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states especially those of interstate conflicts. The leaders of the countries embroiled in conflict avoided the OAU, knowing that the response from the regional body would take time while focusing on mediation which would not help their cause. They wanted quick action.

The sub-regional organizations offered that kind of alternative because of their direct impact each feels from the nearby conflict. In addition, although the requests were officially addressed to sub-regional organizations, they were dispatched through the respective sub-regional hegemony, rather than the countries chairing the organizations at the time. In the West, Liberian leader Samuel Doe opted to use Nigeria to route its request to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) while in the South, Lesotho’s Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili opted for South Africa to raise his request to the South African Development Community (SADC). This suggests the

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<sup>5</sup>Falk, R., p 74

importance of sub-regional hegemons: Samuel Doe and Pakalitha Mosisili knew that affirmative responses by the sub-regional organizations depended upon decisions made in Nigeria and South Africa.

In the DRC case, President Laurent Kabila's request was addressed directly to SADC as an organization and not to a particular state. Although the DRC is part of SADC, the absence of a clear-cut hegemon in the Central African region propelled Kabila to consider the whole SADC organization as an option for his request. The action of Kabila can also be attributed to the fact that leaders of some SADC member states, like Nelson Mandela and Robert Mugabe, realized that the conflict in DRC needed some form of sub-regional organization's involvement non-existent in Central Africa. This realization soon materialized when the DRC speedily admitted to being SADC member despite some leaders' reluctance. The reason for such a rapid admittance was precisely to afford Kabila a chance to formally request SADC assistance. However, Kabila did not fully understand that sub-regional hegemons are the most effective vehicle to encourage sub-regional organizations to authorize intervention in a conflict area. The other possible explanation is the relationship of Kabila and Mugabe who by then was a chairperson of SADC. Possibly Kabila submitted his request knowing that Mogabe was a chairperson of SADC and that he would encourage other SADC member to assist him. This argument may be supported by the reluctance of South Africa to recognize Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia's intervention as representing SADC in the DRC. Nevertheless, the main issue is that had there been a hegemonic state in Central Africa, Kabila likely would have opted for the same route taken by Liberia and Lesotho in seeking intervention.

The requests were followed by peacemaking interventions. In the West, ECOWAS in the form of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) launched military peacemaking intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone in 1990 and 1997 respectively. In the South, SADC conducted a similar intervention in Lesotho in 1998. In the absence of hegemonic commitment to peacemaking, the conflict in the DRC saw a number of military interventions by various African states, with members of SADC,

particularly Zimbabwe, stating that they were representing the sub-regional organization.<sup>6</sup>

The interventions in Liberia and Lesotho are better understood as interventions by sub-regional hegemons, with the approval of the sub-regional organization. The main financial and personnel commitments in both peacemaking operations were created by South Africa and Nigeria. In Liberia, Nigeria contributed 70 percent of troops and 90 percent of financial requirements; whereas, other states made up for the difference.<sup>7</sup> In Lesotho, South Africa initiated the operation alone until nightfall when it was joined by Botswana with 200 troops.<sup>8</sup> As reported the mission was accomplished by the time the Botswana troops arrive in Maseru. This should not be surprising in light of the contrast between the authority of sub-regional organizations to intervene and the lack of resources and political will to do so. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to initiate peacemaking intervention without the extensive assistance and motivation from sub-regional hegemons.

The tension between sub-regional organizations and sub-regional hegemons in peacemaking intervention is related to a demarcation of responsibility regarding disjuncture between the authority and obligation and the will and affordability to intervene. The authority and obligation primarily rests with the organizations themselves with the power (military and resources) and the will (interest) resting with the sub-regional hegemons. This disjuncture creates a problem when it comes to peacemaking intervention in the African region. Firstly, due to the absence of the international community, the sub-regional organizations are viewed as the legitimate bodies that can grant authority for any kind of peacemaking intervention taking place in the sub-region as a result, they also have a moral obligation of ensuring peace and stability in their respective spheres. When a situation erupts, which requires appropriate measures to be taken by the organization, they find themselves faced with a lack of necessary resources for such actions, which ultimately leaves them no choice but to seek alternative sources

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<sup>6</sup> "Zimbabwe/DR Congo: Why we must intervene" *Africanews* 39 (June 1999), p 2

<sup>7</sup> Sesay, A., "West African Military Intervention in the 1990s: The Case of ECOWAS in Liberia and Sierra Leone" in Leone du Plessis and Michael Hough, op cit, p 210

<sup>8</sup> Neethling, T., "Southern African Military Intervention in the 1990s: The Case of SADC in Lesotho" in Leone du Plessis and Hough, op cit, p 287

of assistance. Secondly, the sub-regional hegemon on the other hand possesses the necessary resources to ensure the successful launch of peacemaking intervention. However, to get the hegemon to participate in the peacemaking intervention as authorized by the sub-regional organization depends on the willingness of a hegemon. This is usually accompanied by some form of benefit known to generate interest (personal, collective or national). These two elements can create a problem because, at times, the interest to a hegemon may not necessarily assure an automatic approval from the sub-regional organization simply because the hegemon is willing to contribute its resources. In addition, what seems to be a moral acceptance by the sub-regional bodies does not guarantee the support of hegemon.

These suggests conducting peacemaking intervention in Africa requires both the legitimacy and moral obligation that flow from the sub-regional organization and the significant resources that flow from the willingness and interest of the sub-regional hegemon to maintain regional peace and stability. Thus, whenever the need for peacemaking intervention develops in the African continent, there are mixed reactions pertaining to whose interest will be served or whose authority will be accepted.

## **B. PURPOSE AND MAJOR ARGUMENTS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Military peacemaking interventions conducted in Africa during the 1990s by sub-regional organizations display one outstanding feature. Even though the formation and creation of sub-regional organizations is based on the notion that all the member states have an equal status and standing, an element of unequal contribution still exist when it comes to peacemaking interventions. Due to the differences in economic capabilities and physical geographic size, some states tend to contribute a large portion of needed resources, such as military equipment, manpower and technical know-how, as compared to other willing member states during peacemaking military intervention.

This thesis will argue that the emerging model of African military peacemaking intervention depends on the decision of such sub-regional hegemon to intervene militarily, which has major implications for peace and peacemaking in Africa. The thesis considers two primary questions. First, what motivates sub-regional hegemon to

participate in military peacemaking intervention in Africa? The second question emanates from the first: what effects do these interventions, based on the identified motivations of the sub-regional hegemons, have on conflict resolution and regional security? Have these interventions contributed effectively to the resolution of African conflicts, or have they exacerbated the situation? These questions derive from the observation that African military interventions of the 1990 are mainly and increasingly undertaken by the militarily strongest states. Given the poor economic conditions of most African states and the peacemaking military interventions that require a significant economic backing and military capability, some states will have to shoulder more responsibility compared to others. This has been the case in both the ECOWAS and SADC where Nigeria and South Africa were sub-regional hegemons during the military peacemaking interventions in their regions. Without South Africa and Nigeria playing leading roles as hegemons during the military peacemaking interventions in their sub-regions, the results could have been very different.<sup>9</sup>

The ability of a sub-regional hegemon to participate in such an operation has ensured that the launching of peacemaking intervention becomes practical instead of symbolic, which has been the nature of African sub-regional organizations during the decades prior to the 1990s. Prior to the 1990s, the African region was clouded by the involvement of Western powers in the affairs of their colonial surrogates, which limited the possibility of other stronger regional states contributing effectively to solving the conflicts. The end of the Cold War led to the withdrawal of the external powers' involvement and opened the opportunity for Africans to take matters in their own hands. This ultimately created a vacuum that was filled by the African hegemons when conducting peacemaking interventions.<sup>10</sup> This then begs the question: under what conditions will these countries be willing to intervene?

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<sup>9</sup> Frederic S., Pearson and Robert A. Baumann, "International Military Intervention in Sub-Saharan Subsystems" *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, vol. 17, Spring 1989, p 115

<sup>10</sup> This is not just a regional issue since it has played a devastating role in the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN as an international peacemaking intervention body. The argument is that for any peace support operation (PSO) conducted under the auspices of the UN, there is always a need for a lead nation. A lead nation is the state that will be willing to contribute a huge amount of resources as compared to other willing but ailing nations in the PSO. Without such a state stepping forward and shouldering the responsibility, the mission will always achieve half-hearted results or even totally collapse.

Peacemaking intervention challenges the non-interference rule of both the UN and the OAU, which is the mainstay of their charters. These articles were set up as the means to curb conflicts as well as to provide a mechanism to resolve already volatile situations. Military interventions as the development of the 1990s indicated that these principles are no longer effective because of the new developments of conflicts in the African continent. One of such developments is the civil character of most conflicts mainly consist of rebel group formations as opposed to the traditional state to state conflicts with conventional militaries. Thus, the mechanisms setups by the regional body were meant for interstate conflicts, involving militaries who could not with the intrastate ones. The intrastate conflicts also introduced a number of rebel factions that possesses military arsenals that have the same capability as most states in the region. The disturbing factor is that most of the arsenals are not controlled as per international rules and regulations but simply change hands within the population, mainly on the informal market. This, in itself, may generate a catastrophe in the already volatile situation in the continent of Africa. In fact, the necessity of peacemaking interventions is motivated by the proliferation of conflicts in the African continent. It is reported that in the period of a decade almost 5 million people, mostly civilians have been killed in conflicts.<sup>11</sup>

### **C. METHODOLOGY AND ORGANIZATION**

Chapter II of this thesis will develop a theoretical framework for addressing the questions raised above and test this framework on the peacemaking interventions in Liberia, Lesotho, and the DRC. Chapters III, IV and V present the case studies Liberia, Lesotho, and DRC, respectively. Chapter VI draws conclusions based on comparative analysis of the case studies.

In Chapter III, the hegemonic position of Nigeria will be assed in relation to the intervention in Liberia. The other issues of interest, international law and morality will be assessed in accordance to their utility in legitimizing and legalizing peacemaking intervention. Chapter VI addresses the question of whether the interventions that took

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<sup>11</sup> Rotberg, I. R., "Peacekeeping and Effective Prevention of War" in Rotberg, R. I. (et al), *Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement in Africa: Methods of Conflict Prevention* (Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p 10

place in the DRC where the result of the absence of a hegemon or other issues such as interest and moral influence. In Chapter V, the hegemonic role of South Africa and its intervention in Lesotho is assessed from the perspective of the issues involving power relations, interest, international law and morality. The main question is whether the intervention in Lesotho was influenced by South African parochial interest or its responsibility as a sub-regional hegemon. Chapter VI presents a comparative analysis of all the three case studies with regard to peacemaking intervention in the African continent. The analysis allows for determination of future impact of such interventions in the continent.



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## **II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **A. THE STATES' MOTIVATIONS TO ACT: REALIST AND GLOBALIST PARADIGMS**

The end of the Cold War has witnessed a lively debate on peacemaking military intervention, which reflects two broad contending perspectives, namely “realist” and “globalist.” Broadly speaking, the realists believe that states do not act unselfishly in the international system, as they are inclined to pursue parochial national interests. According to this school of thought, when states conduct peacemaking interventions in the domestic affairs of other states, apparently on behalf of the international community, they do so not only to secure political and diplomatic support and consensus but also to camouflage their own national interests. Globalists, on the other hand, believe that the post-Cold War international system constitutes what can loosely be called a global community. Thus when states undertake peacemaking interventions, they do so primarily to alleviate human suffering in the target state.

Furthermore, globalists argue that the international community ought to intercede to prevent bloodshed by whatever means available.<sup>12</sup> They further argue that states should no longer be allowed to hide behind sovereignty in the face of massive human rights violations and/or genocide. Implicit in the globalists plea for humanitarian intervention is their acknowledgement of the imperatives of globalization that among other things has turned the world into a global village. The result is what Weiss and Chopra call global “moral interdependence” and expanded “humanitarian space.”<sup>13</sup> The globalist’s view was adopted by the UN in 1992 when it created the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in the Secretariat with Security Resolution 688 which linked internal repression to refugee flows. Ultimately this defined threats of international peace and security. This initiative paved the way for the UN uninvited humanitarian intervention in Somalia in 1993. This UN position brought into sharp focus what was

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<sup>12</sup> Lyons, G. M. and Mastanduno, M., “Introduction” in *Beyond Westphalia*, (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), p 12

<sup>13</sup> Weiss, T. and Chopra, J., in *Beyond Westphalia*, op cit, p 111

accepted by the scholars of foreign policy long before globalization became a buzz word, that in an increasing interdependent world, the division between what is domestic and what is external to a state is a very thin one.”<sup>14</sup>

According to the realist perspective, peacemaking military intervention can still be best understood in terms of power and interest while the globalist’s view international law and moral principles as also playing significant roles. Thus, while globalists have justified expanding international intervention, realists warn that hegemons “may cloak their interests in the language of the common good and may claim to be acting in the name of the international community.”<sup>15</sup> Sub-regional hegemons often try to obtain multilateral consensus after initiating and orchestrating peacemaking interventions, “in order to achieve their hidden agendas in the target states.”<sup>16</sup>

The realist paradigm suggests two factors that are likely to be important in a sub-regional hegemon's decision to undertake a peacemaking intervention: power and interest. The globalist paradigm suggests two completely different factors: international law and morality. In fact, as I will argue in this thesis, all four elements have a direct impact on a sub-regional hegemon's decision to intervene.

### **1. Power**

The first and the most recognized issue with respect to any intervention is the necessity of power projection. Given that conflicts within particular states and especially African states, with readily permeable borders- cannot be insulated from their wider regional setting, intervention must inevitably reflect and, in turn, affect regional power relations.<sup>17</sup> Considerations of power relations within a region highlight the critical issues of sub-regional hegemony and the projection of the power in approaching peacekeeping military interventions.

The most critical issue facing effective regional security systems is that of leadership. Initiating and encouraging peacemaking intervention is extremely difficult

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<sup>14</sup> Sassy, A., “West African Military Intervention in the 1990s: The Case of ECOWAS in Liberia and Sierra Leone” in du Plessis, L. and Hough, M., op cit, p 200

<sup>15</sup> Lynos, G. M. and Mastanduno, M., “Introduction” in *Beyond Westphalia*, op cit, p 12

<sup>16</sup> Sassy, A., p 197

<sup>17</sup> Christopher Clapham, p 38

unless one state is prepared to take the initiative to commit the necessary resources, to accept the inevitable costs, and to put together a coalition with other states in the sub-region that are prepared to devote some of their own resources towards the operation. According to Clapham,

Leadership is central to any effective security system and the very uneven distribution of capabilities among the states within a particular region often preordains certain states to take a leading role. At the same time, it is essential that this role should be accepted by other states within the region and limited by conventions that prevent it from degenerating into the mere imposition of domination by regional hegemons over their weaker neighbors.<sup>18</sup>

The way a sub-regional hegemon is perceived by its weaker neighbors is important. When the hegemon is perceived as a source of security and protection for weaker and more vulnerable states, the weaker states tend to ally with the hegemon in a process described as 'bandwagoning'.<sup>19</sup> A hegemon tends to utilize this kind of opportunity to influence the other states in the sub-region to join in its decision to launch peacemaking intervention. However, this preferred roadway can be used to shield other hidden agendas of the hegemon.

For sub-regional hegemons to be effective in its effort to mount peacemaking intervention, there is clearly a need exist for such a state to combine various element, such as military might, economic dominance and other important areas such as the availability of manpower. The possessions of such elements open-up the needed influence when it comes to peacemaking intervention. Huntington argues that hegemonic politics is also always about power and its struggle and that today international relations is changing along that crucial dimension. He further argues that a regional system will have one hegemonic power, no significant powers, and many minor powers. As a result, the hegemonic power could effectively resolve important regional issues alone without any combination of other states have the power to prevent it from doing so.<sup>20</sup> The hegemon in the sub-region of course, "is the sole state with preeminence in every domain

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder, eds., *Dominoes and Bandwagons: Strategic Beliefs and Great Power Competition in the Eurasian Rimland*, (Oxford University Press, 1991)

<sup>20</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 2 (March/April 1999), p 35

of power-economic, military, diplomatic, and technological-with the reach and capabilities to promote its interest in virtually every part of the region.”<sup>21</sup> He adds a caveat when he mentions that a hegemonic power can also be looked at in terms of its ability to work with others in the interests of the region as a whole because of the hegemon’s willingness to pay the costs for peacemaking operations and to accept the risks of unilateral regional leadership.<sup>22</sup>

In order for other states in the sub-region to acknowledge the power of a hegemon in the sub-region, it should exercise its position in a tactfully. This point is supported by Yorums and Aning in their analysis of hegemonic power. They argue that hegemonic power is based on two dimensions, “hegemony-as-influence” and “hegemony-as-leadership. The difference between these two is emphasized by the delineation of “hegemony as influence” as the power to sway or to affect the behavior of others based on prestige, wealth, ability or status. “Hegemony-as-leadership,” on the other hand, refers to the deliberate effort to guide the deeds and opinions of others or to be the guiding character in a collective process. They also argue that the appropriate way of identifying a hegemonic state in the region is necessary to determine the extent to which power and power relations in the region can or are in a position to predict the likelihood of peacemaking military interventions.<sup>23</sup>

The conduct as well as the outcome of the decision to launch peacemaking intervention is absolutely based on how a sub-regional hegemon behaves in the region, particularly when it comes to its relations with the other states in the sub-region. Robert Gilpin provides a good theoretical framework for a better understanding of hegemonic behavior in the international system that can also be applied to sub-regional politics in mounting peacemaking military intervention. In this theory, a hegemon is defined as the leadership of one state over the other states in a system. The definition is given more specific meaning by examining the type of leadership activities in which a hegemonic state engages. A hegemon takes a position of leadership in the international system to

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p 36

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p 39

<sup>23</sup> Gani Joses Yorums and Emmanuel Kwesi Aning, “From Economic to Political Integration: Towards an Analysis of ECOWAS Transformation”, *African Peace Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (October 1997), pp 37 and 68

expand its influence and control and to reap greater economic and security benefits.<sup>24</sup> It pursues these expansive tendencies through economic, political and military dominance. Therefore, for peacemaking intervention to succeed, sub-regional hegemons should be able to combine the economic, political and military elements, which are clearly acknowledged by other states in the region.

However, coercive power is not only essential when it comes to the hegemonic influence but it is also beneficial to other states. A hegemon succeeds partially because it overwhelms lesser states and because it provides public goods and services that benefit other states. In return, the hegemonic state gains more by establishing its dominance in this way than it pays for the cost of these actions. Gilpin cites the examples of the Pax Britannia and Pax Americana as examples of hegemonic states imposing peace and security on the international system in such a way as to benefit the hegemonic state.<sup>25</sup>

This framework, unfortunately, does not acknowledge the role and existence of hegemons in regional/sub-regional systems. However, the theoretical framework can be used as a measure for evaluating the behavior and influence of hegemons on a micro-scale. The framework is additionally helpful when it further suggests that a hegemon will involve itself in cooperative action either exclusively for its own beneficial reasons or for the benefit of whole regions. These actions may or may not consequently benefit the region. Since, by definition, a hegemon is a leader, the hegemonic state will likely take a dominant role in whatever action it chooses to participate. Its motivations and actions can affect relations with the other participants who will, in turn, affect the performance of the actors and the outcome of cooperative action.

The acceptance and acknowledgment of a sub-regional hegemon by other states in the sub-region is the first factor influencing whether a hegemon will intervene through peacemaking operations. The reason this is essential in the African continent is its association with the historical legacy of state to state relations, mainly based on suspicion due to the permeable territorial boundaries and colonial exploitation experiences. The problem with the boundaries is related with the cross-border ethnic linkages, which may

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<sup>24</sup> Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, (Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp 29 and 145

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

be used by other states as a pretext to claim for attempting to annex a piece of territory from the other state. Many African states have a significant percentage of their population sharing common ethnical connections, which create an imbalance in terms of which population belongs to which state. The problem has always generated regional tensions because at some stage members of an ethnic group in one state might perceive that their ethnic kin are treated badly in another state. This difference encourages unacceptable treatment of the minority in the other states whose leaders are members of the different minority ethnic group in the other state. This situation has been reflected in deadly conflicts in the Great Lakes region of Africa (Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda).

The other factor, likely to be related to a favorable decision for a hegemonic state to intervene, is the power of economic capability of such a state. Clearly involvement in peacemaking intervention requires formidable resources for the operation to commence, and since the poor economic status of many African states is also known, a decision to intervene may not be forthcoming. This is where the power of the hegemon comes in; this power is also based on economic capability that then becomes essential in influencing the hegemon's decision to intervene in peacemaking military intervention.

Economic power needs to be supported by an element of military capability because it is only through military instrument that peace can be achieved in a conflict area. An important fact to know is whenever a hegemon decides to launch peacemaking intervention; it will probably face rebel groups possessing some sophisticated military hardware as well as the know-how capability to utilize this. This necessitates the need for a hegemon to also possess in its arsenal some sophisticated military instruments feared by the opponents as well as by the personnel that handles such equipment.

From this element of power a realist's hypothesis can be developed in relation to its influence on the decision of a sub-regional hegemon to intervene: sub-regional peacemaking intervention is more likely when a hegemonic power is economically formidable and its position is acknowledged by other states in the region, whether explicitly or implicitly.

## **2. Interest**

The concept of national interest continues to serve a useful role in determining the state's motivations to engage in peacekeeping military intervention. Alexander George and Robert Keohane distinguish different types of interest as a means to clarifying this fuzzy concept.<sup>26</sup> Although their discussion is general, it can be applied to the question of peacemaking military intervention to identifying the interests that might motivate such action.

First, George and Keohane discuss the concept of self-regarding interest that deals with the question of whose interests are principally involved with respect to peacemaking military intervention, the argument here is that sub-regional hegemons will be motivated by issues associated with their national identity and survival when they contemplate getting involved in peacemaking intervention. The issues at hand are the preservation of the state's territory and lives and property of its citizens. This category is directly related to the realist perspective that states are inclined to pursue parochial national interests. What makes this element important is its accountability and responsibility of a government to its constituents, which means that the issues of greatest concern to domestic constituents will become number one priorities when it comes to a hegemon's decision to intervene. The argument is that the preservation of citizen life is one of the elements of state interest.

The second concept is other-regarding interests, which in the context of this thesis purports that sub-regional hegemons will partake in peacemaking intervention not out of consideration of their own benefit but for the sake of being members of the international community. This concept is aligned with the globalist perspective because of its belief in hegemons as not driven by parochial interest but by the moral obligation. The argument which underlines this concept is based on the notion that a state will participate in peacemaking military intervention for the sake of ending the conflict on behalf of the people or the government of the other state because they cannot afford to do it themselves.

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<sup>26</sup> George, A and Keohane, R., "The Concept of National Interests: Uses and Limitations" in George, A. *Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy: The Effective Use of Information and Advice*. (Westview Press, Colorado, 1980), pp 217-37



The third concept is collective interest, which in this thesis involves the notion that the decision of sub-regional hegemon to partake in peacemaking intervention stems from the belief that intervention will not just benefit themselves but also the sub-region as well as the international community. The rationale stemming from this concept is that peacemaking intervention is a necessity for the hegemon which will, in turn, be beneficial to the regional peace and stability and thus serving the long term objectives of the hegemon. Both the realist and globalist's perspective supports this argument because of its middle ground position this concept occupy, i.e. states act out of self-interest but interdependence creates a common interests so self-interest requires acting for collective good.

The fourth concept which is not covered by George and Keohane in their criterion and of which is an important aspect in most third world countries, particularly in the African continent, is personal interest. It is imperative to keep in mind that in developing countries the head of state epitomizes the state itself; Africa is not unique in that regard. According to Sesay,

African leaders are the state in their respective countries. As such, even major policy decisions could be made merely to satisfy these leaders' whims and caprices, no matter what the long-term consequences might be for the state and its citizens. The situation is exacerbated in crisis periods, and under military dictatorships, because relatively little or no time exists for broad-based consultations.<sup>27</sup>

Understanding that the motivations of sub-regional hegemon must include not only traditional national security interests, but also the personal interest and motivations of African leaders who are only very lightly constrained, if at all, by state institutions.

National interest plays a significant role in motivating a sub-regional hegemon towards a favorable decision to participate in peacemaking intervention. For any state to act in a peacemaking intervention it should provide an acceptable justification to its domestic constituency because without such an explanation the policymakers are faced

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<sup>27</sup> Sesay, pp 217-8

with losing their political position. In Africa it can be argued that is no clear demarcation exist between state and personal interests for those in the leadership position; nevertheless, this does not eliminate the fact that some sort of explanation is still needed in order to legitimize their use of state resources. The type of interest involved also affects the urgency of the expected decision from the hegemonic state. If the conflict taking place in the other state in the region affects the self-regarding interest of the hegemon, it then becomes more imperative for the decision to be made urgently as opposed to other-regarding or collective interest. An example may be the difference between the Nigerian peacemaking intervention in Chad 1964 and Liberia 1992 respectively. In the case of Chad, Nigeria's decision was taken unilaterally without consultation of the ECOWAS because of the closer proximity of the two states. Thus, the fear of the eminent repercussion from the conflict into Nigeria was quickly realized. Unlike in Liberia the decision was taken in consultation with the sub-regional organization because the conflict was not as damaging to the Nigerian state. From this element, a realist hypothesis can be drawn with regard to a hegemon decision to intervene in peacemaking intervention: sub-regional peacemaking is more likely when the interests of the hegemon are at stake. The more the interests are self-regarding interests the greater the threat to those interests, the more likely intervention becomes.

### **3. International Law**

During the decade of the 1990s, a trend emerged justifying some cases of peacemaking military intervention, even if the international law did not formally acknowledge that right. Thus, the growing tension between the legitimacy and legality of peacemaking military intervention became clear at the end of the 1990s, not only to scholars but also to governments and public opinion. That tension truly was indicative of the process of change in international law that was underway. International law, especially rules of a customary nature, normally lags well behind political, moral and social developments. International law has its own rules for change with their purpose being to ensure that general sentiment towards legitimacy and new political developments remains constant. During transitional periods, international law can be somewhat contradictory because it must strike a balance between old and new values.

Some significant events took place in the 1990s and have influenced the evolution of the rules of international law concerning non-intervention. The ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone in 1990 and 1997, and SADC in Lesotho in 1998 were peacemaking military interventions that were not regarded as illegal by states. Consequently these interventions were not condemned by the international community. While the circumstances in all of these cases were not entirely the same, the perception that they were acceptable necessitated their establishment in international law. The second event was the evolution of international law in the 1990s the “internationalization” of the protection of human rights, which thereby removed them from the domestic jurisdiction of states. Thirdly, resolute UN Security Council action in the 1990s to prevent humanitarian crises, restored peace in states torn by civil strife while rebuilding societies that also laid the groundwork for a reformulation of the principle of non-intervention. The Security Council not only agreed on concrete measures that would help alleviate humanitarian crises, but it also decided to reinforce respect for humanitarian law by creating, in the aftermath of several conflicts (including former Yugoslavia and Rwanda), international criminal courts.

There is still an acknowledging that peacemaking runs counter to the previously held norm of non-intervention and the related tenets and rules of international law that govern justified intervention. What these interventions show, however, is the inadequacy of the law, drawn up half a century ago and marked by notions of sovereign power and international order no longer sustainable. Four characteristics distinguish and establish peacemaking intervention legitimate, despite the proscriptions of international law.

First, peacemaking intervention gives concrete expression to the emerging norm of such intervention in the pursuit of peace and humanitarian concerns, particularly where genocide and gross violations of human rights occur. Second, as a collective intervention, multilateral peace support operations require a UN mandate in the form of a Security Council resolution and similar resolutions from other intergovernmental organizations (ECOWAS and SADC), as well as impartiality or neutrality on the part of the intervening forces. This is clearly different from military intervention undertaken as a one-sided action irrespective of whether one or more states intervene to the conflict at the explicit invitation and on behalf of a party (as happened in the DRC). Third, this type of

intervention must also be mandated and legitimized by broad acceptance by the international community of states, i.e. the “critical mass of nations.”<sup>28</sup> Finally, this intervention does not always comply with the established legal precepts that govern military intervention. In some instances, no request for intervention was made in advance by the government or governing authority of the target territory. In these instances collective intervention was unilaterally initiated by and undertaken by the auspices of an intergovernmental organization, to be condoned, mandated and sanctioned after the event by the said organization. This indicates that actions and means are morally justified and not illegal; however they are not yet legally regulated, and therefore, not legal either.<sup>29</sup>

The problematic concept of international law with regard to peacemaking military interventions is one of the fundamental issues analyzed by Martin Ortega<sup>30</sup>, lecturer in international law and research fellow at the Institute for Security Studies of Western European Union (WEU) since 1997. In his paper, he proposes new conditions by which to determine the best possible link between the legality, legitimacy and political opportuneness of military interventions. National sovereignty, of course, remains the basic principle on which the international order is founded: respect for the territorial integrity of states and non-interference in their internal affairs are the foundations of international law as codified by the Charter of the United Nations. Nonetheless, the principle of sovereignty has always been rich in perverse effects. Certainly, attempting to combine respect for states’ sovereignty, human rights and the principle of self-determination has always been one of the international order’s major deadlocks.

The concept of national sovereignty has also played a prominent role in the African continent, particularly based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states. Since its birth in Addis Ababa on May 25, 1963, the OAU has proclaimed to the world its commitment and competence as the primary agency to

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<sup>28</sup> Glennon, M. J., “The New Interventionism: The Search for a Just International Law”, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 78, (May/June 1999), p 7

<sup>29</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *SIPRI Yearbook 1999: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press, 1999), p 4

<sup>30</sup> Ortega, M., “Military Intervention and the European Union” *Chaillot Paper 45* (ISS of WEU, March 2001), pp 1-69 [<http://www.iss-eu.org/chaillot/chaillot/chair45e.html>]

intervene or rather to mediate in African conflicts.<sup>31</sup> A key element of the charter of the OAU is surely the member states' commitment to the principle of "peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration."<sup>32</sup> However, much of the commitment by the member states in the OAU was concerned with the interstate conflicts rather than the intrastate.

Three factors serve to emphasize the OAU stand on the above issue. First, the charter of the OAU was based on determining interstate-system rather than on the intrastate-system solutions. With this went adherence to the principle of non-interference in the internal matters of other sovereign entities. Second, the OAU charter institutionalized recognition of the existing colonial borders. The last factor was based on the non-conflictual rule, which governed the charter of the OAU.

These factors reflected and, to an extent, governed state behavior in the OAU to a remarkable degree, resulting in the region being in the 1960s and early 1970s largely free from interstate conflicts.<sup>33</sup> For example, the OAU mediation and diplomatic pressure helped dampen and/or to resolve boundary disputes between Algeria and Morocco and also among Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia.<sup>34</sup> However, this fixation of the OAU towards interstate relations led to isolating of internal conflicts in the African continent that threatened the regional stability, which was to be the cornerstone of the organization. Thus, the OAU and its member states were reasonably successful in insulating disputes, such as the Nigerian civil war from external military involvement,<sup>35</sup> in preventing disputes between member states from escalating into armed conflict,<sup>36</sup> and in limiting and resolving those conflicts which occurred.<sup>37</sup> The failure of the OAU as a regional security

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<sup>31</sup> Sam G. Amoo, "Role of the OAU: Past, Present, and Future" in Smock, D.R., ed, *Making War and Waging Peace: Foreign Intervention in Africa*. (United States Institute of Peace, 1993), p 239

<sup>32</sup> Charter of the OAU, article 3, par 4

<sup>33</sup> MacFarlane, S. N., "Intervention and Security in Africa". *International Affairs*, Vol 60, Issue 1 (Winter, 1983-84), p 56

<sup>34</sup> Frederic S. Pearson and Robert A. Baumann, "International Military Intervention in Sub-Saharan African Subsystem", *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, Vol. 17 (Spring, 1989), p 118

<sup>35</sup> Strenlau, John, J., *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil Wars: 1967-1970* (Princeton University Press, 1977), pp 373-5

<sup>36</sup> Zartman I. William, *International Politics in the New Africa*, (University Pres of America, 1987), p 88

<sup>37</sup> Warllerstein, I., *Africa: The Politics of Unity* (New York, Random House, 1967), p 73

body was reinforced by the belief that intervention in the internal matters of member states was unnecessary, because the national elites in the African region are largely concerned with personal enrichment rather than peace and stability in the region.

The majority of the principles contained in the OAU Charter are clearly opposed to intervention, particularly military intervention. Clearly from this premise that, the OUA was tailored means specifically to deal with interstate conflicts and not aimed to intervene in the internal affairs of African states. A resolution was passed at the OAU summit held in Libreville, Gabon in 1977, which condemned all non-African interference in the continent. This led to the formation of committee in 1978 that managed the conflicts between African states that generally invited external military intervention. However, because of the lack of a proper mechanism to deal with internal issues, the summit was forced to uphold the right of every independent African state to call upon friendly countries outside the continent for assistance if they perceived that their security and sovereignty was under threat.<sup>38</sup>

The OAU, for instance, did not condemn the external military interventions in Shaba province in Zaire to support Mobutu during 1977 and 1978 respectively, presumably because the interventions did not threaten the integrity of neighboring states. However, this abstinence of the OAU was due to the organization's weak military and political base, and constraints of its own non-interference clauses.<sup>39</sup>

Supporters of a different role for the OAU because of the number of internal conflicts forwarded various proposals, including the proposal for an African High Command, based on the concept of continental defense agreement. It was, however, not made clear whether this would pertain to dealing with interstate or intrastate conflicts. The Kampala Document of 1991, although not an official OAU document, repeated the call, with specific reference to external military aggression by non-African states against

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<sup>38</sup> Sesay, A., ed., *African and Europe: From Partition to Interdependence or Dependence?* (London: Groom Helm, 1986), p 170

<sup>39</sup> Michael Hough, "Military Interventions in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Historical Overview" in Leone du Plessis and Michael Hough, *Managing African Conflicts: The Challenge of Military Intervention*, HSRC Publishers, Pretoria, South Africa, 2000), p 184

the continent or any member state. The military operations envisaged under these structures were distinguished from peace support operations.<sup>40</sup>

Based on the adopted position of non-interference in the internal matters of another state by the OAU, it became clear. The OAU, as a regional organization, has admittedly failed to serve as a mechanism to deal with African conflicts, since they are largely domestic in character or they are an alternative option to contemporary solutions. However, some indications are that some of the leaders in the OAU are starting to question some of the articles in the charter. The OAU Secretary-General made the following comment during the OAU summit held in Senegal in July 1992:

It is arguable, therefore, that within the context of general international law as well as humanitarian law, Africa should take the lead in developing the notion that sovereignty can legally be transcended by the 'intervention' of 'outside forces', by their will to facilitate prevention and/or resolution, particularly on humanitarian grounds. In other words, given that every African is his brother's keeper, and that our borders are at best artificial, we in Africa need to use our own cultural and social relationship to interpret the principle of non-interference in such a way that we are enabled to apply it to advantage in conflict prevention and resolution.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, there has been a shift in the emphasis regarding the non-interference principles of the OAU charter. The initiative, as far as peacemaking military intervention is concerned, has passed to sub-regional organizations, such as ECOWAS and SADC, with the assistance of some clear-cut sub-regional hegemons, such as Nigeria and South Africa, and the with (ex post facto) blessing of the OAU.

However, since the end of the Cold War, a new regulation has gradually been put into place that will, in the long term, make it possible to redefine the basis and legitimacy of military interventions, above all, even in the absence of a UN mandate. One of the new basic assumptions of the international order in gestation is that sovereignty can never be a pretext for genocide, a principle that is perhaps the most stabilizing for international

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<sup>40</sup> OAU, Kampala Document for a Proposed Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA), Kampala, Uganda, 23 May 1991, p 17

<sup>41</sup> OAU, *Resolving Conflicts in Africa: Proposals for Action*, 1992, p 17

security in the twenty-first century. The main question that has to be dealt with regarding peacemaking military interventions is “whether the international community has a ‘right’ to intervene to respond to human suffering or political instability, with or without government agreement.”<sup>42</sup> The dilemma of peacemaking military intervention with regard to international law can be traced since the beginning of post-Cold War period. This dilemma was highlighted by Javier Perez de Cuellar, former Secretary-General of the UN in his address at the University of Bordeaux, in the spring of 1991, when he stated that:

[T]he right to intervene has been given renewed relevance by recent political events... We are clearly witnessing what is probably an irresistible shift in public attitude the belief that defense of the oppressed in the name of morality should prevail over the frontiers and legal documents.” Nevertheless, he asked, “[D]oes it not call into question one of the cardinal principles of international law, one diametrically opposed to it, namely, the obligation of non-interference in the internal affairs of States?” In acknowledgment of this tension between the necessity of intervention and prevailing norms of international society, de Cuellar called upon the international legal community to help develop a “new concept, one which marries law and morality.”<sup>43</sup>

More recently, Boutros Boutros-Ghali reaffirmed the problem in his report to the UN Security Council on strengthening the capacity of the world organization in matters of international peace and security.<sup>44</sup> “Respect for [a state’s] fundamental sovereignty and integrity” he wrote, is “crucial to any common international progress.” Nevertheless, he continued, “the time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty... has passed”; for that matter, “its theory was never matched by reality.” While his statement did not offer solution to the dilemma, he did emphasize the need for governments to understand that sovereignty is not absolute and that it can no longer be used as an excuse to avoid peacemaking military intervention.

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<sup>42</sup> Gene M. Lyons and Michael Mastanduno, “Introduction: International Intervention, State Sovereignty, and the Future of International Society” in Gene Lyons and Michael Mastanduno, *Beyond Westphalia? State Sovereignty and International Intervention* (John Hopkins University Press, 1995), p 2

<sup>43</sup> UN Press Release SG/SM/4560, Apr. 24, 1991

<sup>44</sup> Lyons and Mastanduno, p 2



“Today, we ask whether recent political changes-the immediate changes that have emerged with the ending of the cold war and the deeper changes that have come with increasing interdependence-have precipitated a shift in the balance between the sovereign rights and authority of states and the right and authority of larger international community.” Lyons and Mastanduno ask whether the world is currently witnessing the emergence and recognition of a legitimate “right” to intervene in the domestic affairs of member states in the name of community norms, values, or interests.

In sum, the rules of international law concerning peacemaking military intervention are still based on the legalistic principle of non-intervention elaborated between 1945 and the end of the Cold War. In the 1990s, however, these norms started to change quite radically as a consequence of UN Security Council practice and enhanced international protection of human rights. The critical question, however, is under what circumstances the international community is justified in overriding sovereignty to protect the dispossessed population within state borders. The common assumption in international law is that to justify such action, there must be a threat to international peace and security. The position now supported by the Security Council is that massive violations of human rights and displacement within a country’s borders may constitute such a threat.<sup>45</sup>

The absence of international community involvement in the African continent since the beginning of the post-Cold war period, particularly in conflict resolution, and the weakness of the OAU as an effective regional conflict mechanism have created a void, which has been filled by the sub-regional organizations. Thus, legal mandates to intervene are now shouldered by sub-regional organizations. The problem with this new responsibility is that for the sub-regional organization to be effective, given the alarming position of the continent as compared to others, the hegemon’s must assist at all cost, which in turn, somewhat hands over the legal mandate to such hegemons. This implies that the occurrence of peacemaking intervention depends on the legal blessing of the sub-regional organization in the sub-region. A globalist hypothesis can be drawn from the discussion of this element of international law as element in peacemaking intervention:

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<sup>45</sup> Francis M. Deng et al, *Sovereignty as Responsibility: Conflict Management in Africa*. (The Brookings Institution, 1996), p 28

sub-regional peacemaking is more likely when the sub-regional organization's assessment of the conflict situation is viewed as transcending sovereignty claims because it involves unacceptable humanitarian sufferings.

#### **4. Morality**

Peacemaking interventions cannot be separated from the ethics of world politics; thus, they confront decision makers with moral dilemmas.<sup>46</sup> Moral concerns are a major cause, and, therefore, a primary source of justification for the intervenient use of military force. In this respect the notion of legitimate or justifiable peacemaking intervention relates to a rights-based approach to intervention which incorporates the circumstances that justify and the rules that dictate and regulate forcible intervention.

The concept of humanitarian intervention has been legitimated in connection to the imposition of a refugee burden on neighboring states. That grounds a right both in customary international law and under Chapter VII of the UN Charter of intervention and /or enforcement action not subject to the limits of purely humanitarian intervention.<sup>47</sup> The threat to peace and security justifies invoking Chapter VII of the UN charter, which overrides the claim of sovereignty and domestic jurisdiction. Luise Drake argues that in respect to internal or domestic conflict that cause massive flows of refugees, "there is an emerging consensus on the legitimacy of taking action in the country of origin so that people would not have to flee."<sup>48</sup>

Yewdall Jennings has argued that traditional doctrines do not provide a legal basis for action against a state that generates refugees. However, he acknowledges that general and customary international law is relevant when considering the legality or the conduct of a state which creates a refugee crisis.<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, Dowty and Loescher argue that recent trends in international opinion tend to favor a broader definition of state

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<sup>46</sup> Johnson, P., "Intervention and Moral Dilemmas" in Forbes, M., and M. Hoffman (eds), *Political Theory, International Relations and Ethics of Intervention*, (Macmillan Press, Houndmills, 1993), pp 62-64

<sup>47</sup> Dowty and Loescher, "Refugee Flows as Grounds for International Action" *International Security*, Vol. 21, No., 1 (Summer, 1996), p 45

<sup>48</sup> Luise Druke, *Preventative Action for Refugee Producing Situations* (Frankfurt; Peter Lang, 1990), p 209

<sup>49</sup> Yewdall Jennings, "Some International Law Aspects of the Refugee Question," *British Yearbook of International Law*, vol. 20939, p 110.

responsibility, which includes prevention harm to others.<sup>50</sup> The UN commissioned “new flows” group declared that “averting massive flows of refugees is a matter of serious concern to the international community as a whole and that such flows carry adverse consequences for the economies of the countries of origin and the entire region, thus endangering international peace and security.”<sup>51</sup>

Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar contend that “as global concern for humanitarian issues increases, ‘the balance between sovereignty and suffering is shifting in favor of greater international sensitivity to the claims of those who suffer’ and greater impatience with the obstructionism of uncaring governments.”<sup>52</sup> However, the most decisive statement in debate on the balance between sovereignty and limits of intervention may be attributed to the former UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In concise language he wrote that “the time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty... has passed; it is theory and has never matched by reality.”<sup>53</sup> Thomas Weiss and Larry Minear wrote that “the world is poised between the Cold War and an embryonic new humanitarian order... in which life threatening suffering and human rights abuses become legitimate international concerns irrespective of where they take place.”<sup>54</sup>

Africa is perhaps the most devastated by internal conflicts and their catastrophic consequences. “Of the estimated 30 million internally displaced persons worldwide, about 16 million are African, as are 7 million of the 20 million refugees in the world.”<sup>55</sup> One can, therefore, argue that international, regional or sub-regional response to the consequence of conflict is therefore motivated as much by common interest in global peace and security as by humanitarian concerns. The contemporary international climate

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<sup>50</sup> Dowty and Loescher, p 53

<sup>51</sup> *UN Doc. A/41/324*, May 13, 1986, paragraph 63

<sup>52</sup> Terrence Lynos and Ahmed Samatar, *Somalia: State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention and Strategies for Political Reconstruction* (Brookings Institution, 1995), p 2

<sup>53</sup> Boutros Boutros-Ghali, “Preventative Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping, *An Agenda for Peace* (New York: United Nations, 1992), p 9

<sup>54</sup> Thomas L. Weiss and Larry Minear, “Preface,” in Thomas L. Weiss and Larry Minear eds., *Humanitarianism Across Borders: Sustaining Civilians in Times of War* (Boulder, CO: Lynn Reinner, 1993), p vii

<sup>55</sup> Francis M. Deng, et al, *Sovereignty as Responsibility: Conflict Management in Africa* (The Brookings Institution, 1996), p xiv

gives support to the erosion of sovereignty is in favor of human rights protection and humanitarian intervention.

Consequently, the sharing of sovereignty begins on the sub-regional and regional levels. The role played by the ECOWAS in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the SADC in Lesotho and Mozambique, the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development(IGADD) in Sudan and Somalia, and the Arab-Maghrib Union (UMA) in the Western Sahara are indicative of new attempts to exercise sub-regional responsibility and accountability within the regional framework.<sup>56</sup>

Deng argue that “the interconnection of regional security situations, and in particular the spillover effects of conflicts, have direct impact on countries of the region concerned. Beyond the region, the tragedies that result from internal conflicts are nearly always the concern of the international community. All these impose responsibilities on governments, which limit their national sovereignty and make them accountable to both the national population and the international community.”<sup>57</sup> This argument implies that the repercussions of refugee movement on other states in the region, may trigger a moral obligation that motivates sub-regional hegemons to contemplate peacemaking intervention.

This element of morality plays a significant contemporary role in justifications for sub-regional hegemons to contemplate peacemaking intervention, but it also influenced by the element of interest. A known factor is that whenever conflict erupts, it leads to displacement of a population, famine and other atrocities, which leads to huge migration of people towards a better environment. Given that the capacity of most African states is not adequate to feed their own population, what if such a state is when faced with millions of refugees seeking protection and security? Additionally, what may encourage a hegemon decision towards a positive involvement is the concern that only African are in a better position to provide assistance to a fellow African who is in distress as well as ensuring a general welfare of their populations. Hegemons find themselves in a better

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid, p xix

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p 24

moral position and thus, contemplate launching a peacemaking intervention in the conflict state.

This may be particularly true in the case of Nigeria in Chad because by then the government in Nigeria was faced with the problem of legitimacy in the eyes of its own citizens. Furthermore, during the Liberian conflict, the Nigerian government, at that time, was a military dictatorship which did not have much legitimacy to most people in the state. A globalists' hypothesis may be drawn from this element of morality: sub-regional peacemaking intervention is more likely when a humanitarian carnage in the sub-region resulting from conflict in a particular state.

In conclusion, clearly all the four elements have a direct impact on the hegemon's decision to contemplate peacemaking intervention, but what this thesis will highlight is the dilemma of peacemaking intervention when it comes to the proper execution of such operations. The disjuncture between the sub-regional possessions of the resources needed in peacemaking intervention supporting the realists' notion of power and interests, and the sub-regional organizations possession of the authority and obligation to deal with conflicts in their region, which supports the globalists' notion of international law and morality. These elements of power, interest, international law and morality will be the variables that guide the assessment of the case studies to test hypotheses outlined above.

Drawing from all the four elements discussed above, this thesis developed a number of hypotheses that will be tested in the chapter III, IV and V respectively. The first two hypotheses are related to a realist's perspective, while the other two are based from the globalist's perspective. First, sub-regional peacemaking intervention is more likely when a hegemonic power is economically formidable and its position is acknowledged by other states in the sub-region, whether explicitly or implicitly. Second, sub-regional peacemaking is more likely when the interests of hegemon are at stake. The more the interests are self-regarding and personal interests-the greater the threat to those interests, the more likely intervention becomes. Third, sub-regional peacemaking intervention is more likely when the sub-regional organization's assessment of the conflict situation is viewed as transcending sovereignty claims because it involves

unacceptable humanitarian sufferings. Fourth, sub-regional peacemaking intervention is more likely when there is a humanitarian carnage in the sub-region resulting from a conflict in a particular state. The last hypothesis is based on the initial argument that all the variables (power, interest, international law and morality) are collectively necessary to the success of peacemaking intervention, because if one is missing, successful peacemaking intervention will not occur

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### **III. WEST AFRICAN PEACEMAKING MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE 1990S: THE CASE OF ECOWAS IN LIBERIA**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) was established in May 1975 as an organization to promote the development of the sub-region. For fifteen years this organization did not deviate from this mandate.<sup>58</sup> The 16 member states of ECOWAS included Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. ECOWAS mainly restricted their interactions to purely economic matters and less focused on political issues confronting West Africa. Political matters were mostly left up to states to deal with each other. The economic rationales for integrative schemes of ECOWAS are clearly spelt out in Article 2(1) of the treaty. The article states that ECOWAS seeks "to promote cooperation and development in all fields of economic activity, for the purpose of increasing and maintaining economic stability."

However, a mechanism was put in place handle the possibility of interstate conflicts; whereas, intrastate matters were completely based on a non-interference principle. The events that ensued in Liberia in 1989 changed this tradition in the 1990s when ECOWAS decided to intervene in this civil war. What clearly came out from this decision was that "nothing in the history of ECOWAS had prepared it for either of these roles. As a regional economic organization, it lacked the institutions and procedures, which could provide the framework for the operation in Liberia."<sup>59</sup>

The emergence and spread of the Liberian crisis resulted from the failure of the ECOWAS to recognize the need to alter the security arrangements established under the protocols of Mutual Assistance on Non-Aggression and Defense endorsed in 1978 and 1981 respectively, towards the one focused on intrastate conflicts. The problem with this

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<sup>58</sup> Adeleke A., "The Politics and Diplomacy of Peacekeeping in West Africa: The ECOWAS Operation in Liberia". *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 33, Issue 4 (December, 1995), p 569

<sup>59</sup> Ibid



arrangement that when a conflict remains purely internal, there was no plan of action taken by the ECOWAS community. For ECOWAS to change its focus towards building mechanisms dealing strictly with intrastate conflict implied that members' states were to be encouraged to use most of their non-existence resources in launching peacemaking intervention, thus opening themselves for future intervention because the lid of non-intervention principles would have opened. Only the states with a significant resource power base as well as non-fearing attitude for a particular state in the sub-region would have welcomed such initiatives. Therefore, in light of this observation it seems the security arrangement for getting involved in the intrastate conflict was left to Nigeria as a hegemon in the sub-region.

This chapter will argue that Nigeria, the sub-regional hegemon is a key to understanding the ECOWAS peacemaking intervention in Liberia.<sup>60</sup> The aim of this chapter is to show the critical role Nigerian leadership played in initiating an ECOWAS peacemaking intervention in Liberia, and to assess the relative importance of power, interest, international law, and morality behind that leadership.

## **B. BACKGROUND ON THE CONFLICT AND THE DECISION TO INTERVENE**

The origin of the Liberian crisis is best understood when traced from its entire historical background preferably starting from the early 1800s; however, for the purpose of this study a great deal of the history will not be considered. This thesis will trace the origin of the conflict from the time when the late Master-Sergeant Samuel Doe was the President of Liberia.

On Christmas eve of 1989 a civil war broke out in Liberia following a series of attacks on security posts on the border of Liberia and Ivory Coast by a band of armed men led by Charles Taylor in the of the previously unknown National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). When the rebels of the NPFL attacked the villages of Butuo and Karnplay in Nimba County in northeastern Liberia "no one, least of all the Liberian government, considered them a serious political threat."<sup>61</sup> Reports state that the attack

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid, p 577

<sup>61</sup> Adeleke, p 574

resulted in a number of government officials and as many as 200 unarmed civilians being killed.<sup>62</sup> In less than six months after the invasion, NPFL was in control of about 95 percent of the country, leaving President Doe and his Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) trapped in the executive mansion in Monrovia.<sup>63</sup> With much of the government control in the hands of the rebels, there was a massive outflow of refugees into neighboring countries, especially Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Sierra Leone, and into more distant countries like Ghana and Nigeria.<sup>64</sup>

The civil war was characterized by wide spread atrocities, human rights violations and sheer human misery on a scale never before witnessed in West Africa. There was a total disregard for international conventions and civilized conduct of war by the government and rebel forces.<sup>65</sup>

There was extensive recruitment of children as soldiers. These child soldiers were encouraged to be cruel to unarmed civilians, especially women and children, by the rebel factions and the government of Liberia. The killing of patients in hospitals, for instance, moved the Italian ambassador in Monrovia to make a passionate appeal to the United States to intervene and put an end to the carnage. At about the same time, five other European ambassadors issued a statement that Liberia was sliding into "anarchy and national suicide."<sup>66</sup>

At the same time, an unparalleled outflow of refugees from Liberia was occurring. According to the 1992 report from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), an estimated total of about 676,380<sup>67</sup> were roaming the sub-region.<sup>68</sup> Under

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<sup>62</sup> *Amnesty International Report* (London, 1990), p 151

<sup>63</sup> Sesay, p 202

<sup>64</sup> Weller, M. (ed), *Regional Peace-Keeping and International Enforcement: The Liberian Crisis* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), p 25

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, p 207

<sup>66</sup> Nwoliye, O. B. C., "The Internationalization of the Liberian Crisis and its Effects on West Africa". In Vogt, M.A (ed), *op cit*, p 60

<sup>67</sup> 480,000 refugees in Guinea, 175,000 in Ivory Coast, 12,000 in Ghana, 6,000 in Sierra Leone, 3,000 in Nigeria and 320 and 60 respectively in Gambia and Togo

<sup>68</sup> UNHCR, Country Report: Liberia, 18 August 1993, in Weller, M (ed), *op cit*, p 365

the auspices of the Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) which Nigerian leader, General Ibrahim Babangida proposed at the Banjul summit of ECOWAS in May 1990, ECOMOG was sent to Liberia on August 1990. The intervention lasted until the end of 1997 when the civil war formally came to an end. About 200.000 died and 1.2 million people were displaced out of a pre-war population of only 2.5 million. In October 1999 there was the final withdrawal from Liberia of ECOMOG force. Multiparty democratic elections were held in Liberia and Charles Taylor was formally inaugurated as the President. However, the conflict itself exhibited all the manifestations of post cold-war intra-state conflict: state collapse; ethnic conflict; political fragmentation; warlordism; and a late and inadequate response from the UN.<sup>69</sup>

### **C. NIGERIAN HEGEMONIC ROLE IN THE ECOWAS DECISION TO INTERVENE: THE IMPORTANCE OF POWER**

Clement Adibe argues that Nigerian hegemony is the critical independent variable that supports the analysis of power as an essential element in the hegemon's decision to intervene.<sup>70</sup> The origin of Nigeria's position in the ECOWAS community can be traced from the organization's inception in 1975. When ECOWAS was formed as an economic community despite the low level of trade, Cote D'Ivoire was the leading economic power of the four largest countries with others being Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal. At the formation of ECOWAS, Nigeria was thought to be the most likely hegemonic force in the sub-region; however, it was in the third position in terms of intra-regional trade.

By the time the Liberian conflict culminated to a momentum that affected the whole sub-region the Nigerian state was clearly dominating according to economic and military capability. Nigerian military expenditure was about US\$ 1.080 million, which was about 2.5 percentage of GDP of about US\$34.8 billion in 1999. The total strength of the Nigerian military force was estimated to be 80.000 in 1999. The nearest rival state was Cote d'Ivoire with a military expenditure of US\$134 million, a 1.4 percentage of GDP of about US\$11.098 billion, whereas the total military force estimated to be 8.100

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<sup>69</sup> Tuck, Christopher, "Every Car or Moving Object Gone: The ECOMOG Intervention in Liberia" *African Studies Quarterly*, 4 (1), 2000 [<http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v4/v4i1a1.htm>], 1/28/ 2003, p 1

<sup>70</sup> Adibe, C. E., "ECOWAS Comparative Perspective" in Shaw, T. M. and Okolo, J. E., *The Political Economy of Foreign Policy in ECOWAS* (Martin Press, 1994), p 187

in 1999.<sup>71</sup> With such leading figures it was evident that Nigeria was a force to be considered within the West African region.

Not only did Nigeria have significant military resources to contribute, but it also had regional and international influence. Nigeria commanded considerable influence within the OAU, the UN and western capitals in comparison to other member states in the sub-region. It was, thus, in a better position to attract foreign support and money for the ECOMOG operations. Estimates are that Nigeria's expenses for the operations were up to \$4.5 billion dollars in the Liberian crisis.<sup>72</sup> Putting into perspective the GDP's of most states in the ECOWAS, clearly from this position, Nigeria was the only West African state with the resources to intervene in the Liberian conflict.<sup>73</sup>

Nigerian policymakers realized that the proposal to intervene in the Liberian situation could create a dilemma of credibility, particularly, from the francophone countries. The size and magnitude of the Nigerian state created a combination of fear and suspicion from the francophone countries, particularly from Cote d'Ivoire which is the stronger states in relation to Nigeria. The fear and suspicion was exacerbated by the inability of Nigerian policymakers to provide a strong justification for their involvement in Liberian conflict. The Nigerian involvement in Liberian conflict could not be justified in terms of its direct impact from the conflict. The two francophone states, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso were in the forefront in terms of feeling the brunt of the Liberian conflict as opposed to Nigeria. Thus, these two states became the main supporters of the anti-Nigerian proposal of ECOMOG thus became the main backers of NPFL.

The opposition from Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso created a dilemma for Nigeria in its quest for hegemonic establishment in the sub-region. Firstly, if Nigeria let the opposition from the francophone states to impede its primary intention, it will become evident from other states in the sub-region that Nigerian is incapable of assuming a leadership role. Secondly, Nigeria realized that the stance taken by both Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso to support Charles Taylor signified that they also have to support

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<sup>71</sup> "Country by Country Comparison" *Janes Defense Weekly*

<sup>72</sup> Yoroms, G. J. and Aning, E. K., "From Economic to Political Integration: Towards an Analysis of ECOWAS Transformation" *Africa Peace Review*, Vol. 1, No.2 (October 1997), p 51

<sup>73</sup> Adeleke, p 578

Samuel Doe since he was already a legitimate leader of Liberia and that was certain to lend them credibility to their involvement. The victory of Charles Taylor with the support of the two francophone states was going to put a question from other ECOWAS members' states on the Nigeria's ability to handle any sub-regional matters effectively, and thus undermine its hegemonic capability and ability.

In order to avoid the stumbling blocks, Nigeria suddenly opted to create Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) to deal with any future conflict in the sub-region, starting with the Liberian conflict. By creating such a committee, Nigeria knew that it can demonstrate its hegemonic position in the sub-region. Nigerian leader, General Babangida called for the establishment of the SMC "to intervene in timely fashion, whenever, disputes arise in the sub-region."<sup>74</sup> The SMC was created to deal particularly with intrastate conflicts that were never catered by the conflict mechanism established in the ECOWAS. Creating and establishing of SMC was a precedent move that shifted the responsibility of sub-regional security arrangement from ECOWAS Secretariat to the hegemony's political leadership. The creation of the SMC was stressed by Nigerian President, Babangida that they were only "being our brothers' keeper". The implication was that since the rest of the world had turned its back on Liberia in its darkest hour, it was left to Africans to come to their rescue.<sup>75</sup>

The decision to launch a peacemaking military force by Nigeria while seeking support from the other states in the ECOWAS community did not follow a smooth path for the hegemon. As expected, the proposal to form SMC was met with vehement resistance from Cote D'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. These two Francophone states were not only in the forefront of opposing the SMC formation and ECOMOG creation, but the primary supporters of Charles Taylor. However, their opposition to the Nigerian initiative was not sufficient to thwart its implementation because ECOWAS realized that the resources possessed by Nigeria were necessary to bring stability and peace in the sub-region. It was only the leaders of Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso who were against

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<sup>74</sup> Yoroms G. J., "Regional Security, Collective Defense and the Problem of Peace Initiative in West Africa: The Case of ECOMOG" *NSIA Conference Paper* (Abuja, 1991)

<sup>75</sup> Sesay, p 210

Nigeria's proposal whereas other states were not prepared to take any stance in the debate.

Nigeria managed to win support from some of the key state actors such as Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Benin. Of the five original member countries in ECOMOG, four were Anglophone and one Francophone. President Soglo of Benin described the extent of the division in October 1992 by declaring that Nigeria's intention to take over ECOMOG was because ECOWAS was too divided to have a common policy for a peaceful resolution was to the problem.<sup>76</sup> The acceptance of the SMC by other states in the sub-region opened a means of creating ECOMOG, paving the way for Nigeria to stretch its hegemonic muscles in the sub-region.

Despite the disputes among ECOWAS concerning the decision to intervene in Liberia, Nigeria's participation was essential for launching the operation. The fact that ECOWAS was an economic organization meant that it had no military resources at its disposal. Additionally, at that time no other state in the ECOWAS was able to offer a package as significant as the one offered by Nigeria because many had not even paid their dues to ECOWAS for years. Nigeria with the sub-region's largest military was the only state in the sub-region to be able to contribute the bulk of equipment and supplies as well as troops.<sup>77</sup> The resources supplied by Nigeria included tanks, artillery and air strike capability and 5.000 of the initial 11.000 troops.<sup>78</sup>

Nevertheless, Nigeria became aware that unilateral action would be unacceptable to internal and international opinion, and would, in any case, reinforce the fear, implicit in intra-regional diplomacy, of its desire to use its hegemonic position to impose its will on smaller neighbors. Thus, Nigeria opted to pursue its Liberian strategy through the framework of ECOWAS.<sup>79</sup>

Ultimately, the leadership provided by Nigeria in terms of logistic, financial and troop support was able to sustain ECOMOG until the end of the conflict. Nigeria's

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<sup>76</sup> Department of State, *Embassy Report from Cotonou to Washington, D.C.* (October 27, 1992)

<sup>77</sup> Riley, S., "Intervention in Liberia: Too Little, Too Partisan". *World Today* (March, 1993), p 42

<sup>78</sup> Husband, M., "Targeting Taylor," *Africa Report* (July/August 1993), p 30

<sup>79</sup> Adeleke, p 578

decision to launch peacemaking military intervention in Liberia was based on its ability to influence other member states in the sub-region and to support its command in overruling intended support from those states that were against its intentions. Nigeria also received strong support and encouragement from the international community.

The dominant position of Nigeria in West Africa enabled it to play a significant role in launching peacemaking intervention in Liberia. Being the largest economic and military power in the sub-region, Nigeria realized that the situation in Liberia would in the long run impact it more negatively than other states because of its size and economic dependence on the stability and peace in the sub-region. Also, the very position advantaged Nigeria to push its intention of establishing SMC and ECOMOG because it was able to lure other smaller states like Gambia and Togo to support its proposal. Gambia's participation in the ECOMOG was motivated first, by its position as chair of ECOWAS and was expected to set a good example. Second, it had close ties with Nigeria for many years, for example Abuja provided the Chief Judge of Banjul in the last fifteen or more years and senior military officers. Togo opted to support Nigeria's proposal once it realized that the bulk of the financial cost and troops was going to be provided by Nigeria and the only thing from them was to show support.

Again, since none of the other countries in the sub-region could effectively finance such force, Nigeria had to take the initiative if it was serious about making its dominance acknowledged within the sub-region and by the international community. Nevertheless, the opposition of other states towards Nigeria indicated that even though it had a significant command of economic and military leadership in West Africa, its dominance in the sub-region was not equally accepted by all the member states, particularly the Francophone states. Thus, in order for Nigeria to play a hegemon, it had to shrug-off serious contention from other states that suspected its initiative as being an attempt to hijack the sub-region to further its parochial interests.

The role played by Nigeria in the West African sub-region and its decision to intervene in Liberia is partly enough to sustain the realists' hypothesis that sub-regional peacemaking intervention is more likely when a hegemonic power is militarily and economically formidable and lacks with regard to its position being acknowledged by

other states in the sub-region, whether explicitly or implicitly. The limitation to this hypothesis is that Nigeria was never acknowledged by all the states in the sub-region to be an accepted leader that can easily solicit support within West Africa. However, additionally this case makes clear that a hegemonic state within the sub-region must be prepared to ward-off some objections emanating from other states that may feel threatened by some of its particular actions.

#### **D. THE ROLE OF INTEREST IN THE DECISION TO INTERVENE**

Nigerian involvement in ECOMOG is a prime example of a case where a combination of personal, economic and political interests motivated the hegemon to intervene in sub-regional conflicts. In the assessment of whether interest played a significant role in the ECOWAS decision to intervene, not surprisingly; therefore, that self-regarding, other-regarding, collective and personal interest played a part in influencing the Nigerian decision to launch peacemaking intervention in Liberia.

The self-regarding interests played a prominent role towards Nigeria's motivation to intervene in Liberian conflict. The main interest was based on the Nigerian government to create a leeway for hegemonic dominance in the sub-region. Nigeria realized that the line of demarcation between the Anglophone and Francophone states had to be transcended before it can achieve its intended purpose of exerting political, military and economic dominance in the sub-region. The decision of Babangida to first set up an SMC as a vehicle to launch ECOMOG under the auspices of Nigeria was a calculated strategy of enhancing Nigeria's dominance in the sub-region. Unfortunately, the Nigerian intentions were realized by Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso, who countered by forming anti-Nigerian proposals of the SMC. They also argued strongly against Nigeria's moot point of justifying their interest in Liberia as not being concerned with the stability and peace in the region but as a parochial interest driven by Nigeria's wish to establish dominance in the sub-region because of its size. In the same token, they further supported Charles Taylor against Doe who was primarily supported by Nigeria. Babangida provide Doe with a plane full of arms to combat Taylor and once it was evident that Doe was going to be defeated, he proposed an SMC to launch ECOMOG in Liberia to stop Taylor.



Nigeria knew that by allowing Taylor victory in Liberia its position in the sub-region was going to be dented and as a result failed to achieve its intended purposes. This is indicated by the fact that even after the death of Doe, Nigeria maintained its opposition to Taylor assuming power in Liberia. By allowing Taylor to take control in Liberia it would have signified to the francophone countries that Nigeria's hegemon can be defeated, of which was what Nigeria wanted to avoid at all cost.

Other-regarding interests which are not so strong to be labeled as the prime motivators for Nigeria's involvement in Liberia, but also important to pay attention to, include the kidnapping, holding hostages, and killing of foreign citizens, especially from ECOWAS member states, which were reported to have reached a climax by the time ECOMOG was sent to Liberia in August 1990. At the same time over 3,000 foreign citizens were held by the NPFL alone, mainly Nigerians. Reports are that "the citizens of Nigeria were specifically marked for elimination, thus NPFL vowed to kill a Nigerian for each Liberian killed by ECOMOG forces."<sup>80</sup> When information like that is received by a state, which the targeted members resided, the onus is on that state to do everything in its power to rescue them, and this was what was expected from Nigeria. Attacks were also carried out against foreign embassies in Monrovia by the NPFL. For example the Nigerian Embassy was invaded at least twice. The attack of its embassy, arrest and murder of citizens was seen by Nigeria as threats to international peace and security which was shouldered by Nigeria because of its economic dominance in region, and partly because it violated the diplomatic immunity of embassy buildings in international law.

The moral pressure Nigeria felt coming from the international community propelled other regarding interest as part of Nigeria's motivation. As a hegemon, Nigeria was afraid that it could not defend an inactive position towards the carnage in Liberia when questioned by the international media, particularly knowing that ECOWAS had no resources to achieve to launch peacemaking intervention. However, this kind of pressure

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<sup>80</sup> Nwolise, O.B.C., "The Internationalization of the Liberian Crisis and its Effects on West Africa" in Vogt, M. A., *The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt at Regional Peace Keeping* (Gabumo Publishing, Lagos, 1992), pp 58-9

was not as explicit as the Nigerian intentions to establish the acknowledgement of its hegemonic dominance in the sub-region

In addition, another argument advanced by Nigeria linked to collective interests was that the conflicts in Liberia posed a serious threat to its state and sub-regional security. This was mentioned because of the hegemonic position Nigeria occupies in the sub-region and the concern about the essentiality of peace and stability. Despite the supposed hegemonic tendencies by Nigerians, a viable security regime in West Africa was not imposed by the sub-regional hegemon decision to intervene in the conflict of Liberia. The intervention occurred because of a convergence of interests shared by most member states to pursue common interest and circumvent certain outcomes relative to specific security preoccupation of ECOWAS. Viewed from this angle, the Nigeria interventions on behalf of the sub-regional community was an orchestrated by Babangida personal staff to cloak his personal interest in the issue of Liberia.

As for collective interest, one major factor that led Nigeria to contemplate intervention in the Liberian crisis was the fear that the civil war, if not contained, may spill into the neighboring countries with very dangerous security and defense implications for the West African sub-region. Along with this fear, the stability of sub-region was threatened by the influx of thousands of refugees fleeing from Liberia into other states. However, this reason was clouded by the argument that ECOMOG forces consisted about three quarters of Nigerian men, so the financial burden of the operation was shouldered by Nigeria. In spite of the fact that the force was established by ECOWAS, the general public perception was that ECOMOG is a Nigerian force.<sup>81</sup>

There is link between Nigeria's intervention in Liberia and its leader's personal friendship to Samuel Doe. As reported by Sesay,

General Babangida was known to be a close friend of Samuel Doe and his government. For instance, it was disclosed that Babangida bought Liberia's \$30 million loan with the African Development Bank (AfDB) for reasons that have been made known to the Nigerian public. When Doe wanted to pursue postgraduate studies in political science in Liberia, he

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<sup>81</sup> Vogt, M. A., "Nigeria in Liberia: Historical and Political Analysis of ECOMOG" in Vogt, M.A. *Nigeria and Peace-keeping: 1960-1992* (Malthouse Press Ltd, Lagos, 1993), p 209

convinced the Nigerian president to finance the establishment of a Graduate School of International Affairs to the tune of \$8 million.” Adding to that some “Nigerian professors were seconded to the school and were paid in US dollars by the Nigerian government.<sup>82</sup>

Liberia even named the institution as the Babangida School of International Diplomacy. Many Nigerians, particularly the informed ones, believed that their president had a hidden agenda in Liberia because he was not transparent about his motivations.

Their friendship of Babangida and Doe did not make Nigeria’s justification for involvement in Liberia easy because many believed that the peacemaking intervention by Nigeria under the auspices of ECOMOG was just a ploy to save his friend Doe. The other factor is that the intervention in Liberia was the result of Babangida’s fixation of establishing himself as the political power broker in the sub-region. Moreover, Babangida’s intervention in Liberia was admiration of how Doe successfully transmuted from a military to a civilian president in 1985; therefore Babangida had a similar ambition and agenda in Nigeria.<sup>83</sup> This point is sustained because of Babangida’s previous reluctance to hand over power to civilian leadership and his delay to hold election in Nigeria until his demise by Sani Abacha.

The Nigerian SMC proposal to launch ECOMOG was also linked to Doe’s visit to Nigeria in May 1990, which led to media reports that Doe had been given a plane load of arms to bolster his war efforts against Taylor. This action by Babangida was an indication that Nigeria wanted Doe to prevail in Liberia and wanted the demise of Taylor. This caused the two-francophone states (Cote d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso) to support Taylor. However, the Liberian leader denied any connection between the war and mentioned that the trip was basically to “show our solidarity with Nigerian leader in the wake of the abortive coup against him, and to reassure President Babangida of our support, and to encourage him to continue to do the good work for our people and lay a solid foundation to democracy in Africa.”<sup>84</sup> Babangida also issued a statement that

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<sup>82</sup> Sesay, p 253

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, p 230

<sup>84</sup> *The Guardian* (Lagos), June 15, 1990

explained his position about the visit of Doe. In his justification, he said “there was nothing wrong in lending an ear to a brother in distress that did not signify acquiescence.”<sup>85</sup>

The Nigerian leader initiative of forming the SMC was mainly ascribed to Babangida’s friendship to Samuel Doe of Liberia. The proposal of Nigeria formation of the SMC came right after it was realized that Doe would not be able to contain or defeat Taylor and this was quickly realized by the leaders of Cote d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso who opted to support Taylor. Therefore any initiative by Babangida on behalf of Nigeria was seen as defending Doe’s interest. Nigerian President argued that the conflict in Liberia posed a serious threat to his state and sub-regional security<sup>86</sup>, supported Kieh and Riley arguments that Nigeria under President Babangida decided to participate in ECOMOG in order to maintain Nigeria’s hegemony and to strengthen its international image.<sup>87</sup> By participating in ECOMOG, Nigeria would be able to maintain its hegemonic image without losing legitimacy for involving itself in another state’s affairs. Moreover, by recruiting other smaller states in the sub-region to join it in the peacemaking operation, Nigeria could enhance its image as an expanding hegemon and its reputation as a cooperative sub-regional power.<sup>88</sup> This effort by Nigeria was an effort to gain legitimacy of its intention to launch peacemaking intervention in Liberia.

Judging from the above discussion of the role of interest in Nigerian intervention in Liberia, it appears that the personal interests of the leaders combined with self-regarding interests, principally constitute the Nigerian intervention, while the remaining portion concern stems for the lives of expatriates and altruistic reasons. The hypothesis that sub-regional peacemaking is more likely when the interests of the hegemon are at stake is sufficiently supported by the evidence provided above.

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<sup>85</sup> *African Concord*, August 27, 1990, p 31

<sup>86</sup> Sesay, p 223

<sup>87</sup> Kieh, G. K. Jr., “Combatants, Patrons, Peacemaker and the Liberian Civil Conflict” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (April/June, 1992) and Riley, S. “Intervention in Liberia: Too little, too partisan” *World Today* (March, 1993), pp 42-3

<sup>88</sup> Shaw and Ihonvbere, p 36

## E. THE QUESTION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

Peacemaking intervention in Liberia happened at the same time as changes in the international community's attitude towards the African conflicts related to the post-Cold War environment. When thousands of people were dying, most of whom were civilians, and hundreds of thousands of others turning into refugees, no organizations were willing to intercede or take action including the OAU, which "merely dusted up its articles on non-interference in the internal affairs of member-states."<sup>89</sup> Nevertheless, when Nigeria started to take matters in its hands, the OUA under the chairmanship of Ugandan President Moseveni, supported ECOWAS efforts to promote peace in West Africa in line with the administration of sub-regional initiatives, as an appropriate first line of action.<sup>90</sup>

From the international perspective, the then UN Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar, categorically stated that the UN would not intervene, while the US, even though it had about 2000 Marines stationed off the coast of Liberia, refused to move in and separate the warring factions. "Meanwhile, as the world looked on and passed the buck more and more Liberians were dying and starving."<sup>91</sup> The international community showed little interest in resolving the conflict in Liberia. However, it was later within the peacemaking intervention that the UN officially mandated ECOMOG's actions under chapter VIII of its charter in October 1992.<sup>92</sup>

The choice was then upon the members of ECOWAS who were faced with thousands of refugees crossing the borders and with increasing regional instability as other rebel forces were aroused, to take. Since ECOWAS, was primarily concerned with economic and developmental matters in the sub-region, it lacked the capacity to assume responsibility for mutual security.<sup>93</sup> Nigeria, as the sub-regional hegemon, took a leading

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<sup>89</sup> Akabogu, C., "ECOWAS Takes Initiative" in Vogt, M.A, op cit, p 73

<sup>90</sup> Sams, K. and Berman E., "Peacekeeping in Africa: Capabilities and Culpabilities" *United Nations Publication*, (UNIDIR/ 2000/3), p 100

<sup>91</sup> Akabogu, p 74

<sup>92</sup> Tuck, C., "Every Car or Moving Object Gone: The ECOMOG Intervention in Liberia" *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol 4, No 1 [<http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v4/v4i1a1.htm>], p 4

<sup>93</sup> Adisa, J., "The Politics of Regional Military Cooperation: The Case of ECOMOG" in Vogt, M.A. op cit, p 213

role in this effort, committing troops and supplies to the operation and communicating the purpose of the operation. Nigeria, expectedly, turned out to be the unofficial spokesperson for ECOWAS, and put forward a variety of explanations to justify the operations in Liberia.<sup>94</sup>

The decision to deploy ECOMOG was contrary to article 3, section 2 of the OAU Charter and the corresponding articles of the UN which expressly forbid interference in the domestic affairs of members states, and it also violated the 1978 ECOWAS Protocol on Non Aggression especially article 2 which demands that each member state shall refrain from committing, encouraging or condoning acts of subversion, hostility or aggression against the territorial integrity or political independence of other member states.<sup>95</sup> It was also clear from the members of the ECOWAS that no economic prosperity and development can be attained in a volatile environment such as the one propelled by Liberian civil war. The question that arises is thus how ECOWAS and Nigeria dealt with the issue of international mandate particularly with the absence of international community interest in Liberia?

The decision taken at Freetown, Sierra Leone, in July 1990, by the then newly inaugurated ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee (SMC), to deploy a Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) into Liberia was the result of an ongoing debate and controversy in the sub-region.<sup>96</sup> The debate dates back from the time when Ghanaian President, Dr Kwame Nkuruma argue for the formation of an African High Command, which was to be a military arm of an African Union Government to facilitate new and strong linkages between the African states. In ECOWAS, some heads of states believed that Liberia presented the sub-regional organization with the challenge of initiative in taking the appropriate decision to salvage the country from disintegration, while others suspected that Nigeria wants to utilize the opportunity presented by the carnage in Liberia to push its hegemonic agenda.

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<sup>94</sup> Sesay, p 210

<sup>95</sup> Adisa, J., p 213

<sup>96</sup> Vogt, M. A., "Introduction" in Vogt, M. A. (ed.), *The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt at Regional Peace Keeping* (Gabumo Publishing, 1992), p 1

The debate was about whether to launch a peacemaking intervention involved considerable animosity among member states in the sub-region. The eruption of the Liberian crisis in 1989 served as a catalyst to highlight the differences among the member states within the ECOWAS community or to encourage the member states to establish a mechanism to work together towards the peace and stability essential for prosperity in the sub-region.

According to Sesay, there were “two foundations on which the ECOWAS legal argument stood.” The two are the 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance on Matters of Defense (MAD) and a letter from Doe to ECOWAS through the Nigerian intervention.<sup>97</sup> The main concern of the MAD document was the unjustifiable destruction of human life and property and the displacement of persons. Based on the MAD, legal justifications for intervention included the various forms of massive damage inflicted by the armed conflict on the stability and survival of the entire Liberian nation; concern about the plight of foreign nations, particularly citizens of the community who are seriously affected by the conflict; the fact that law and order in Liberia had broken down; and lastly, a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict ending the situation which seriously disrupted the normal life of innocent citizens in Liberia.<sup>98</sup>

However, even though the MAD provided the necessary reasons for preparing to send the ECOMOG force in Liberia, ECOWAS could not expeditiously deal with the Liberian conflict because of its domestic nature. The main reason for this problem is that ECOWAS conflict resolution mechanisms are designed for interstate conflicts within the region and not intrastate ones. This also created a problem in the procedure that has to be followed when discharging the MAD protocol. ECOWAS proposed that three organs be put in place before the final acceptance of being involved in internal conflicts. These were: Defense Council, Defense Commission and Allied Armed Forces Council (AAFC).<sup>99</sup> However, “none of these structures were in place, a potential signal that the

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid, p 211

<sup>98</sup> ECOWAS, Standing Mediation Committee, *Decision A/DEC.2/8/90*, on the Cease-Fire and Establishment of an ECOMOG for Liberia in Banjul, Gambia (August 7, 1990)

<sup>99</sup> Weller, M. (ed), “Regional Peacekeeping and International Enforcement: The Liberian Crisis” *Research Centre for International Law: Cambridge International Documents Series*, Vol. 6 (Grotius Publications, Cambridge University Press, 1984), p 67

community was not ready for a military role in Nigeria.”<sup>100</sup> Therefore, the peacemaking intervention in Liberia could not have been justified within the context of the ECOWAS treaty or MAD protocol because the proposed procedures were not adhered to stringently.

The letter from Doe emanated from the professed view that a sub-regional organization is entitled to mount peacemaking intervention in the matters of another state if it received a request from the government of the state in conflict. Article 16 of the MAD protocol provides that “in case of armed threat or aggression” directed against a member state the Authority shall, on receipt of a written request submitted to the current chairperson, with copies to other members, decide on the expediency of military action in relation to the provision of article 6. “The exception to this aspect of the principle of non-intervention would be when the intervention is carried out at the request of a sovereign government”.<sup>101</sup> Kofour claims that Doe letter read “It would seem expedient to introduce an ECOWAS peacekeeping force into Liberia to forestall increasing terror and tension and to ensure a peaceful transitional environment.”<sup>102</sup>

Since the letter was sent to the Nigerian government to be presented to the ECOWAS community, some officials not surprisingly have complained that they never saw or were informed about such correspondence. The other issue is that even “if it insinuated that Doe desired military assistance, the issue of his effective control over Liberia and hence the legal validity of any such alleged request is called into question.”<sup>103</sup> This argument is supported by the observation that at that time the NPFL had gained control of over 90 percent of Liberian territory with Doe’s administration being under siege. Doe’s effective control over Liberia was non-existent and, accordingly, his ability to function as a government in the strict sense is a moot point.<sup>104</sup> Nevertheless, according to legal precepts Doe was still the internationally recognized sovereign ruler of Liberia.

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<sup>100</sup> Adisa, J., p 214

<sup>101</sup> Kofour, K. O., “The Legality of the Intervention in the Liberian Civil War” *African Journal of International and Comparative Law*, Vol. 5 (1993), p 551

<sup>102</sup> Weller, M (ed), p xi

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, p 553

<sup>104</sup> See Liberia: ECOMOG’ Retakes Buchanan, *Africa Research Bulletin*, (Political Series) Vol. 30, No 4. (April I, 1993), pp 10978 col A – 10979 col.C



From the discussion above a central point has to be addressed and has bearing on the “non-interference clause” and the MAD protocol. To what extent can the Liberian crisis be regarded as internal when it placed a heavy refugee burden on neighboring states? Samuel Doe’s request together with the acknowledgement, particularly by Nigeria, that a state of anarchy and total breakdown of law and order in Liberia led to the decision to set aside the sovereignty claim and non-interference principle. The fact was no longer resulted in the contending factions holding the entire population as hostage, depriving them food, health facilities and other basic necessities of life. The intervention undertaken in Liberia does not support the globalists’ hypothesis that sub-regional peacemaking is more likely when the sub-regional organizations’ assessment of the conflict situation is viewed as transcending sovereignty claims and leading to unacceptable humanitarian sufferings. The request of Doe routed through Nigeria served the primary purpose of the incumbent government because it was through that they were able to justify their involvement in the Liberian crisis.

#### **F. MORALITY QUESTION**

The then Nigerian president, Ibrahim Babangida, provided a strong moral justification for the Liberian operation on behalf of ECOWAS and Nigeria. In a speech in Lagos, he focused primarily on humanitarian considerations:

...we are in Liberia because events in that country have led to the massive destruction of property by all the parties, the massacre by all parties of thousand of innocent civilians including foreign nationals, women and children some of whom had sought sanctuary in the churches, mosques, diplomatic missions, hospitals and Red Cross protection, contrary to all recognized civilized behavior... I ask, should Nigeria and other responsible countries in the sub-region stand and watch the whole of Liberia turned into one mass graveyard?...we also know that there are those who are waiting to see the Liberian crisis as a concrete indicator of Africa in disarray and despair, purposeless and without any direction or control...in Liberia, we are first and foremost reflecting the love we have for our respective countries, our sub-region, Africa, the black world, and mankind... If the 1990s... demand a redefinition of what constitutes national security, does the Nigerian position in the West African sub-region also entail certain specific roles and responsibilities? Consequently, the reasons for our presence in Liberia are not mysterious.

They are simply our national obligations voluntarily contracted...or would the position of ECOWAS be more noble and much better understood if because one faction refused to cooperate...we had abandoned Liberians to fate?<sup>105</sup>

From this speech a few issues actually explained the moral element which initially emphasized the expected role of ECOWAS as a sub-regional organization when humanitarian concerns supersede the sovereignty claim of a state in civil conflict. The argument here is that ECOWAS has a moral obligation when it comes to the events in Liberia. The surprising part is when the moral obligation of ECOWAS was to come from Nigeria's President rather than from the Secretariat of ECOWAS. This explains that Nigeria attempted to use any avenue to hide its real intentions and the reason for launching peacemaking intervention in Liberia. Another point about moral obligation is that it is usually not enough by itself to ensure a launch of peacemaking intervention, but when is supported by contribution of the required resources it can be easily sustained as a motivation that cloaks self-regarding interests. This is where the role of a sub-regional hegemon, Nigeria comes into play. The moral obligation made Nigeria the latitude to launch peacemaking intervention in Liberia and in itself brought two important elements in the sub-regional efforts. In the case of Liberia, this moral obligation enabled Nigeria to hide behind moral arguments because of its possession as well as equipped with the necessary coercive military force.

Another point, which emanates from the above speech, is acknowledgement of Nigeria that as a hegemon, the onus is on them to prove their worth in the sub-region to the international community. This implies that even though the moral obligation is mostly placed on the shoulders of ECOWAS, obviously required resources to deal with the conflict. The next step is the international community is expectation that the most powerful state in the sub-region, in this case Nigeria, would act to enhance the objectives of the sub-regional organization. Thus, Nigerian leader realized that moral obligation is

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<sup>105</sup> Press Briefing by the President at Dodan Barracks, Lagos, October 31, 1990, titled "The Imperative Features of Nigerian Foreign Policy and the Crisis in Liberia", pp 12-14. Emphasis added by Sesay, A., pp 215-16

not only a driving force that can actively insure Nigeria's lead role but also an important element for Nigeria's own interest.

The Nigerian leader returned to this theme in another famous speech in 1992. On that occasion, he argued that:

While Nigeria respects the principle of non-interference in the affairs of a member state, we believed very strongly that the crisis in Liberia, the oldest independent country in West Africa, demanded the attention of ECOWAS. This was because the killings were getting out of hand as there was no longer a credible authority to establish order in the country.<sup>106</sup>

The Nigerian position was supported, rather surprisingly, by the chairperson of the OAU, Uganda's Yoweri Museveni, who apparently set aside one of the most revered concepts in inter-African relations: non-interference in the internal affairs of one another.<sup>107</sup>

The emphasis on the severity of killings and refugee problems stemmed from both Nigerian as well as the other members of the ECOWAS who feared the effects of spillover from the Liberian conflicts. The argument is that a country like Nigeria when faced with a problem in the region that threatens the peace or stability of a member country, and could spread to others, should act to eliminate the threat of refugee problem. If Nigeria could not stop the threat, the region could be ablaze with instability.<sup>108</sup>

However, there are some reasons to be suspicious about the claims that the problem of refugees was the issue which set in motion the Nigerian decision to undertake peacemaking intervention. According to the 1992 report from the total estimated total of about 676,380, only 3,000 in Nigeria.<sup>109</sup> From this report Nigeria apparently experienced almost the least number of refugees as opposed to the neighboring countries like Cote

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<sup>106</sup> Quoted in *African Concord* (Lagos), 10 August 1992, p 22

<sup>107</sup> Sesay, p 216

<sup>108</sup> From the speech of General Yakubu Gowon, who ruled Nigeria from 1966 to 1975, quoted in *African Concord* (Lagos), 19 August 1992, p 22

<sup>109</sup> UNHRC, Country Report: Liberia, 18 August 1993, in Weller, M (ed), op cit, p 365

d'Ivoire or Burkina Faso. In addition, one should ask why Nigeria should play the role of prime mover in initiating a peacemaking intervention while some Liberia's more immediate neighbors, who as a result of geographical proximity were directly threatened and impacted, did not contribute much, and some remained hostile to the concept of ECOMOG and refused to work within the SMC.<sup>110</sup>

The answer to this question is found in the assessment of position of Nigeria in the sub-region, which relate to the moral responsibility when possessing the means to act when required by humanitarian principles. The international community also expected Nigeria to show its concern with the stability and peace and the region by acting decisively when mandated by moral decay in the sub-region. Being the largest industrial and economic power in the sub-region, it is expected from Nigeria to utilize such resources when humanitarian carnage is dominant in the sub-region. However, judging from the numbers of refugees, as a result of the conflicts in Liberia was enough to warrant ECOWAS to be concern with the stability and peace in the sub-region. The concern will not have been enough to stop the carnage but action which Nigeria responded positively to that regard.

Although the globalists' hypothesis that sub-regional peacemaking intervention is more likely when humanitarian carnage exists in the sub-region can supported by the significant number of refugees in the sub-region, as a reason for why Nigeria was so fired up to deal with the conflict in Liberia this hypothesis cannot be sustained because Nigeria experienced less impact than other states in the sub-region. It could be easily argued that Nigeria embraced the issue of human suffering to hide its real intention of intervening in Liberia.

## **G. CONCLUSION**

The position, in which ECOWAS found itself with regard to the conflicts in Liberia, was a clear case that indicated the limits of sub-regional organizations in dealing with peacemaking intervention. The most obvious limit was the inability of the

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<sup>110</sup> Vogt, M. A., "Nigeria in Liberia: Historical and Political Analysis of ECOMOG" in Vogt, M. A., op cit, p 210

ECOWAS to develop a conflict resolution mechanism to manage intrastate conflicts because of its focus on ensuring non-interference in the sovereignty of other member states. The emergence of civil conflict in Liberia dictated that the choice before ECOWAS was either to accept Nigerian dominance of ECOMOG or accept Liberia's disintegration. Stopping the carnage in Liberia required that a significant resource be utilized to overcome the power of the rebel groups who possessed major arsenals. Nigeria was the state possessing such resources and it was willing to use them to its own advantage. The initiatives taken by Nigeria were clouded by its interest as the motivating factor in the decision to intervene. The personal interest of Babangida was a major reason to intervene in Liberia; however, this was not surprising because personal rule is part of the game in African politics. Doe's request for assistance from ECOWAS through Nigeria served to support the personal interest of Babangida.

On the international law aspect, the ECOMOG force was largely accepted by the international community because of its reluctance to get physically involved in peacemaking effort, and its knowledge that supporting ECOWAS mandate would ensure Nigeria's resources being used. The humanitarian carnage in Liberia was definitely appalling and, thus, required some form of action from within the ECOWAS states. The role of ECOWAS and Nigeria in deciding to mount peacemaking intervention in Liberia facilitated the argument that the realists' element of power and interest contributed to the overall decision. However, there is one crucial observation that emanated from this case: a sub-regional hegemon is capable of unleashing peacemaking intervention in the sub-region even if its leadership role is not equally acknowledged by member-states, provided it has a formidable economic and military power that can be utilized to ward off such challenges. In addition, this case has indicated that the mandate from sub-regional organizations matters because Nigeria strived to obtain ECOWAS mandate before intervening in Liberia. As the hegemon and containing the significant resources needed by a sub-regional organization enhanced the provision of a legal standing, because without the through contribution of the hegemon there will be no possibility of peacemaking intervention, which is viewed by all in the sub-region to be essential for stability and development.

## **IV. CENTRAL AFRICAN MILITARY INTERVENTIONS IN THE 1990S: THE CASE OF THE DRC**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Central African region, also known as the Great Lakes Region, is made-up of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC- formerly known as Zaire). These states' relations are somewhat unstable, mainly due to the ethnic make-up in the sub-region. Mathee mentions that the Tutsi and Hutu animosities in the sub-region had a spillover effect, which was dominating, in the entire region.<sup>111</sup> However, this is not the place to account for all the turmoil in the Great Lakes Region. The focus here is on the crisis in the DRC.

In 1998 about thousands of fighters from at eight African states and several rebel groups were involved in a war in the DRC. This chapter investigates how the development of this war has impacted the peacemaking initiatives in the African continent, by looking at the case from several perspectives. It will examine the conflict from the time when Laurent Kabila ascended the presidential throne because this is era where the efforts of peacemaking military intervention started to be visible to the international community at large.

The element of power differs from the previous case due to the absence of a formidable sub-regional organization, which comprise of a clear-cut hegemonic state within the sub-region. The question of a hegemon will be looked at, from two perspectives. The first will be based on the argument that no state is recognized within the sub-region as a natural power. The second will be based on the acknowledgment that the DRC is part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), from which South Africa is a recognized hegemon; however, its manner of its involvement will be a topic of discussion. Thus, this chapter will argue that the absence of a clear-cut hegemon in the sub-region has affected the way things have developed in the sub-region.

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<sup>111</sup> Mathee, H., "Central African Military Intervention in the 1990s: The Case of the DRC" in du Plessis and Hough op cit, p 254

## **B. BRIEF BACKGROUND ON THE CONFLICT AND DECISIONS TO INTERVENE**

The immediate setting of the conflict in the DRC is the 1994 genocide of moderate Tutsi by Hutus in Rwanda. The Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front over-ran Rwandan territory and its government later that year. The Hutu refugees, fearing retribution, fled to camps in eastern Zaire, where the president, Mobutu Sese Seko, allowed the Hutu Interahamwe militia, responsible for the genocide, to regroup under the cover of the refugee camps.<sup>112</sup> Mobutu's actions of not doing anything to stop the militias from regrouping angered the rulers of Rwanda and ultimately led the new Patriotic Front government to provide military backing to rebel groups in eastern Zaire seeking to overthrow the Mobutu regime.

At the same time, the Ugandan government of Yoweri Museveni was fighting against the insurgent groups supported by Sudan and operating from DRC,<sup>113</sup> while the Angolan government complained about UNITA using Zaire territory as their hiding territory. Mobutu and his government ignored protests from these other governments. Kabila and his rebel group, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL), were the most prominent players in the struggle to overthrow Mobutu and had conducted sporadic campaigns since the 1960s. This shared interest among those who complained about Mobutu got them together, and these allies succeeded in ending Mobutu's 30 years of rule in the DRC.

From this strong alliance, Kabila assumed power in May 1997; however, this was short lived because he soon lost credibility with those who brought him to power. "Initially the support of the Ugandan and Rwandan governments acted as a security net for the Kabila government with its small power base in Zaire's capital, Kinshasa."<sup>114</sup> Both Uganda and Rwanda started to switch allegiance while starting to support rebels opposed to Kabila.

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<sup>112</sup> Dashwood, H., "Mogabe, Zimbabwe, and Southern Africa: The Struggle for Leadership" *International Journal* (Winter 2001-2002), p 80

<sup>113</sup> *Africa Confidential*, May 9, 1997, pp 1, 5-6

<sup>114</sup> Matthee, p 262

Uganda and Rwanda helped Kabila because they wanted to secure their borders against rebel attacks. Rwanda refused to adhere to Kabila's demands of removing the Rwandan forces from DRC because the Interahamwe continued to use eastern DRC as a base. Furthermore, Rwanda claimed that Kabila was supporting the rebels to attack Rwanda, Kabila vehemently denied. As for Uganda, President Museveni was mainly concerned about dissidents using northern DRC as a base from which to launch attacks against his government. He also reportedly made the Congo a personal campaign on which he could manifest his self-justified position as a sub-regional leader.<sup>115</sup>

The Rwandese and Ugandan governments' resentments against Kabila again led the governments to join hands in assisting rebel forces against the AFDL forces. Thus, Rwanda opted to support the rebel factions in Goma, while Uganda backed the faction based in Kisangani. These actions from the two DRC neighbors gave the rebel forces an edge over Kabila's forces, which ultimately led to Kabila controlling at best one half of the country, from the equatorial region in the northwest to mineral-rich Katanga. The rebels controlled the other half of the country while rapidly advancing towards Kabila's territory.<sup>116</sup>

By July 1998, rumors in Kinshasa implied an invasion by the armies of Rwanda and Uganda, and the same time, cross-border movements of their forces increased.<sup>117</sup> Faced with the prospect of being overthrown by the rebel forces, Kabila formally appealed to the SADC for help. Kabila joined SADC in 1997 after his case was supported by the former South African President, Nelson Mandela who, at the time, was also the chief mediator between Mobutu and Kabila. Mandela cited the significance of DRC in the region and its willingness to contribute to developing Africa's economic and political position in the international system. However, for Kabila, the reason to join SADC in 1998 was originally to offset the power of Rwanda and Uganda in Central Africa and at the same time to have a legitimate appeal of assistance from his friends down South.

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<sup>115</sup> Blunt, E., "DR Congo War: Who is Involved and Why," *BBC News Online* (January 25, 2001), [www.bbcnews]

<sup>116</sup> Dashwood, p 84

<sup>117</sup> *Africa Confidential*, July 10, 1998, p 3. See also the copy of August 28, 1998, p 4



Kabila's request was recognized by Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia who cited the violation of international law by Uganda and Rwanda as their justification to intervene. Zimbabwe sent in its highly trained and well-equipped troops to quickly occupy the Mbuyi-Mayi region, forcing Rwanda to back away from its initial intentions. Angolan troops occupied the southwest region, thereby securing the DRC's access to the sea. The deployment of Namibian troops was mainly intended to support Angolan forces to root out UNITA forces not to enter of borders.

Two reasons exist for Kabila opting to request external intervention from the SADC. Firstly, the absence of a recognized sub-regional body in Central Africa dictated that in order for Kabila to feel secure from other states in the sub-region, SADC membership was the logical answer. Secondly, Kabila knew that his request for joining SADC would not strongly be opposed by states in the SADC because of their stakes in the DRC. He also knew that for the assistance of those who have interests to be forthcoming, he should route his request through the SADC because by then Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe was the Chairperson of SADC and would endorse his request. Mugabe waited for the opportune moment to announce Kabila's request.

On August 7, President Mogabe, who was then a chairperson of SADC then, convened a summit at the Victoria Falls to discuss Kabila's request and the Congo crisis.<sup>118</sup> What was surprising was that all the presidents of the member states were invited to accept for South Africa, the hegemon in the sub-region. It can be argued that Mogabe's actions confirmed the reports that he took the DRC's request as an opportunity to assert his leadership in the sub-region which was vanishing and being replaced by Nelson Mandela of South Africa. However, not much came out of the summit; perhaps Mogabe was using it as a testing ground for his authority.

The absence of South Africa in one of the crucial meetings, organized by Mugabe deliberately to isolate the hegemon, resulted in the decision to provide military support to the DRC.<sup>119</sup> Mugabe knew that including South Africa in the meeting would jeopardize

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<sup>118</sup> Cornwell, R and Potgieter, J., "Africa Watch A Large Peace of Africa? *African Security Review*, Vol 7, No 6, 1998, p 75

<sup>119</sup> Bangura, Y., "Comments on Regional Security and the War in Congo" in Mandaza Ibbo, ed, *Reflections on the Crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo* (Harare, Southern African Regional Institute for Policy Studies, 1999), pp 27-8

his intention of intervening militarily in the DRC. This is what Mugabe and his allies feared to take place, and isolating South Africa was seen to be a calculated strategy.

Indeed, South Africa objected to the intervention in the DRC by other SADC member states, claiming that it was not the right approach to dealing with the conflict in the sub-region. South Africa opposed the decision made by SADC to intervene in the DRC, but did the majority of SADC membership support military intervention in the DRC? As far as other member states in the SADC were concerned with the intervention in the DRC, silence was the response from all of them, which led to the complication of whether SADC as an organization supports the intervention in the DRC. This ultimately leads to the question of why South Africa, as a hegemon, did not launch a peacemaking intervention in the DRC.

Firstly, at the time of the turmoil in the DRC, South Africa was still trying to understand the politics of the sub-region from its long absence in the affairs of the SADC. Even though it possessed all the necessary resources appropriate for peacemaking intervention, other member states judged with suspicion because of its past involvement in the sub-region. Therefore, the question arises as to why South Africa should provide the resources to intervene in the DRC when it does not have any control over the use of resources. Secondly, unlike other SADC states that intervened in the DRC, South Africa did not have any particular interest besides an altruistic wish of seeing an end to the conflict in the sub-region.

Thirdly, the factor of distance also contributed to a non-intervention posture of South Africa in the DRC. The DRC is located far away from South Africa and as a result a conflict in Central Africa has no practical damage to the interest of South Africa. Committing troops to such a far-off state therefore, was not going to play well for the South African government recently elected, that needed to establish credibility in its domestic sphere rather than in the international one. Lastly, since peacemaking intervention required a deployment of military forces, capable of handling such a situation, this issue played on the side of South Africa negatively. South Africa was, at that moment, busy with the integration and transformation of its forces, which did not have any peace support operation experiences at hand. To avoid embarrassment, a useful

route for South Africa to take was of mediation in the DRC. Nevertheless, in a complete turn around in September 1998 at a mini SADC summit in Durban, the South African government announced that the intervention was reasonable because the DRC had been invaded, but South Africa announced that it would not send troops itself.<sup>120</sup> This sudden change of heart by South Africa was compelled by its intention to do the same in Lesotho later the very same month. South African government knew about their intention to going in Lesotho in advance because as soon as they changed their stance towards the interventions in the DRC, both Mandela and his deputy, Thabo Mbeki left for overseas leaving the Minister of Home Affairs, Mangosuthu Buthelezi to act the President. Thus, interest was the cause for South Africa to support DRC external intervention.

From this case, two findings emerged from the element of hegemonic power in the sub-region. First, the absence of a hegemon in the sub-region does not prevent the occurrence of military intervention, but it certainly affects the nature of such intervention. The interventions in the DRC could not be labeled as peacemaking because there were more parochial concerns from those who intervened in the DRC than finding a peaceful resolution to the civil war.

Second, the absence of a hegemon contributes to non-coherence in the nature of interventions in a conflict-prone state; as a result, a vacuum of command and control exists with no state being willing to shoulder such a responsibility. This stems from fear of upsetting other states, which can easily declare war. In contrast, a hegemon is able to decide on which course of action to take without fear of retribution from the other states.

The realist hypothesis that sub-regional peacemaking intervention is more likely when a hegemonic power is economically formidable and its position is acknowledged by other states in the region, whether explicitly or implicitly, is sustained in this case. Clearly, in this case the absence and non-participation of a hegemonic state in the DRC conflict resulted in a typical traditional military intervention where states intervene to further protect their own interests. Although, Mugabe played a role in insuring that the hegemonic power of South Africa was kept out, South Africa itself was not practically interested in the matters of the DRC.

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<sup>120</sup> Dashwood, pp 84 and 87

### C. VARIOUS INTERESTS OF THE INTERVENERS

Their national interests as well as some leaders personal interests influenced the involvement of several African states in the DRC conflict. This development was prompted by the non-participation of a rightful sub-regional hegemon in the crisis of the DRC. Although a number of South African firms were mentioned in the UN report, this was a private business, which had no connection to the South African government, thus collective interest was the only driving force behind South Africa's involvement in the DRC. The leadership of South Africa has consistently indicated that stability and peace in the Great Lakes region was valuable to the African continent because of its locality and the interest of many states in that region. This became evident when Nelson Mandela voluntarily mediated between Kabila and Mobutu in 1996 and later called for incorporating the DRC into SADC. The route taken by South Africa with regard to the DRC conflict confirmed the realist hypothesis that a sub-regional peacemaking intervention is more likely when the self-regarding interests of the hegemon are at stake. The attitude of South Africa in the DRC conflict opened a floodgate of interventions propelled by the self interests of several states that had high stakes in the Central African region, particularly in the DRC.

In the case of Zimbabwe, the element of self-regarding interest and especially personal interest dominated their decision to intervene militarily. The position of Zimbabwe was motivated by concern of repayment in the event of Kabila's overthrow because the DRC owed a war debt of several million dollars. The business interests of some of President Mugabe's associates and senior officers were at risk also.<sup>121</sup> Even before the intervention in 1998, Mugabe had provided support to Kabila in his campaign against Mobutu. He had, for example, donated 5 million US dollars in 1996 to the cause in exchange for contracts.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> For analysis of patron-client networks in the Zimbabwean Military, see Young, E., "Chiefs and Worried Soldiers: Authority and Power in the Zimbabwe National Army", *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol 24, No 1, (Fall 1997), pp 139-149, 137-140

<sup>122</sup> Nest, M. "Ambitions, Profits and Loss: Zimbabwe Economic Involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo," *African Affairs* 100, p 484

When Zimbabwe government announced its decision to intervene in the DRC it was met with criticism by both the public and international donors because of its shaky financial situation and the obvious expenses that would be incurred in such operations. The government justified its action by arguing that the intervention would be financed through contracts that the Kabila government had promised to the Zimbabwe Defense Industry and by Kabila granting mining concessions to Zimbabwean interests. However, these arrangements were already in place long before the decision to intervene, and actually provided the motivation for decision to intervene. In early 1997, for instance, a deal worth 53 million US dollars was reached between the Zimbabwe Defense Industry and Kabila to supply his forces with food, uniforms, and weaponry.<sup>123</sup>

As for personal interest, the search for private economic gain on the part of Mugabe's cronies and the military leadership,<sup>124</sup> who has a personal stake in the DRC's rich mineral wealth and are on the boards of directors of mining companies.<sup>125</sup> It did not come as a surprise that Zimbabwe's troops were stationed in southeast DRC (Katanga), where large mineral deposits, including diamonds, are situated. As additionally reported the commander of the Zimbabwe Defense Forces, Lieutenant General Vitalis Zinivashe, the director of the Osleg (Pvt) Ltd, joint venture with Comiex-Congo Sarl, in which senior members of the DRC government had interests.<sup>126</sup> Without a doubt the issue of personal interest has contributed to a large extent towards motivating Mugabe and his circle to encourage intervention in the DRC.

The other reason motivating Mugabe to intervene in the DRC, treated by many as a secondary issue, is his concern about the diminishing leadership role plays in the sub-region since the admittance of South Africa in the SADC. Prior to the admittance of South Africa in the SADC, Zimbabwe was largely playing a leadership role in the sub-

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid

<sup>124</sup> On the economic activities of Zimbabwe (and Rwanda and Uganda) in the Congo see *Report of the Panel of Experts on the illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, (New York: UN, April 12, 2001) and *Addendum to the Report* dated November 13, 2001

<sup>125</sup> Kahiya, V., "Diamond Company to pay Zimbabwe for role in Congo," *Zimbabwe Independence*, June 09, 2000, [www.samara.co.zw/zimin

<sup>126</sup> "The Military-Financial Complex," *Africa Confidential* 42 (June 15, 2001), p 2 and "Glittering Prizes from the War," *Africa Confidential* 41 (May 26, 2000), pp 1-4

region, which was then abolished when South Africa became official part of SADC. The DRC's request gave Mugabe an opportunity to assert his leadership in the sub-region allowing him to exploit the institutional advantage by his long membership in SADC. Zimbabwe was the most powerful states in the sub-region with regard to military and diplomatic influence of the Frontline States prior to South Africa's admittance in SADC. This caused a split in the SADC over who should speak for the SADC. According to Mugabe, South Africa would not truly represent African interest as opposed to 'Western' i.e., white interests".<sup>127</sup> The elevated status of Mandela ensured that South Africa would become a key player in SADC, Mugabe, however, opposed since he considered himself the elder statesmen or, at least, the longest-serving one in the sub-region. Because of this Mugabe thought he could more rightfully speak for Southern Africa.

As for the Angolans, the intervention in the DRC was motivated by purely self-regarding interest including concerns of national security. The Angolan government, which had supported Mobutu's overthrow, was concerned about the involvement of Mobutist generals, soldiers and politicians in the rebellion against Kabila. The Angolan government also recognized that a stable Congo would secure its borders against a growing UNITA insurgent threat emanating from Congolese bases. Angola was also interested in increasing its chances of restoring the Benguela railway line, and gaining oil and diamond business.<sup>128</sup>

The involvement of Angola also stemmed from the mining concessions negotiated with Kabila, who wanted to ensure continuing support from Angola. Initially, the Angolan president, Dos Santos, announced that he was not prepared for a full scale war against UNITA because of the lack of funds to sustain such an operation. The president made an arrangement with the Rwandan government in August 1998, but all that changed as soon as the offer from Kabila was put on the table. The depressed oil prices and tight credit lines restricted the development of offshore oilfields, meaning that Angola had limited funds for any war.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Bangura, p 27

<sup>128</sup> Matthee, pp 265-6

<sup>129</sup> *New African*, October 1998, pp 14-5. See also *BBC Focus on Africa, October-December 1998*, pp 5-7

As for Namibian involvement in the DRC, the element of collective interest was the strong influencing factor. The main reason for Namibia being interested in the Congo was its concern that UNITA forces were using DRC territory to wage war against Angola, causing substantial instability in the more heavily-populated northern areas of Namibia. Thus, Namibia supported the Angolan government in its effort to root out UNITA forces from their bases. Another reason was the contribution that the Namibian government wanted to make in the SADC as a new member state after getting independence from South Africa in 1990. Furthermore Namibia wanted to extend appreciation towards Zimbabwe and Angola for their support during the struggle for liberation in the 1980s.

The personal friendship among Mugabe and Namibian President, Sam Nujoma and Angolan President, Dos Santos played a significant role in their decision to intervene in the DRC. The friendship is witnessed when they arranged a meeting among themselves and excluded other members of SADC, thus took a decision to simultaneously intervene in the DRC

Under the element of interest and its influence in the possibility of peacemaking intervention several factors became evident. First, the disinterest of a hegemon in a conflict-ridden state has a potential of luring other states in the sub-region that have much more stakes to lose. Such intervention eliminates the peacemaking element which is expected by the international community. Thus, in the nutshell, intervention can take place in the sub-region without support from the hegemonic state, but it does not become the expected peacemaking intervention, which is desired by both the sub-regional organization and the international community. Obviously, when states other than the hegemon intervene they are driven by protecting their parochial interest combined with personal endeavors because of their limited resources and difficulty maintaining support from within the domestic arena. The realist hypothesis stressing the importance of a hegemon's power and interest in sub-regional peacemaking is evidently crucial towards shaping the pattern of such operations.

#### **D. WAS THERE A MANDATE?**

The conflict in the DRC highlighted the crisis inherent in African peace initiatives at the international, regional, sub-regional and local levels. On the international level, it became clear that the international community was not prepared to get physically involved in the African conflicts. This is particularly important because the genocide in Rwanda, which was left unchecked by the international community, resulted in the public opinion that the UN and other major international actors would no longer opt to stand aside if such an event took place in Africa. Nevertheless, when the crisis in the DRC became known, the international community decided that it was time for Africans to deal with their continent's conflicts and to find African solutions. Important to add is that the Somalia event of 1993 was still fresh on the minds of many western powers. Thus, not surprising the international community implicitly supported Uganda, Rwanda and Angola in assisting Kabila to overthrow Mobutu, who was seen as a ruthless dictator who had outlived his utility as the main actor in Central Africa. The encouragement was basically associated with the notion that Africa's new breed of leaders are now realizing that they must act decisively against any leader who is deemed to be destructive to the future of the continent. Nevertheless, when the second round of intervention took place in the DRC, the UN strongly condemned the actions of all the states that intervened while particularly encouraging South Africa to condemn their actions as well.

On the regional level, the OAU was not prepared to handle a crisis of this magnitude because of its structural weakness combined with its shortfall of resources needed to support this type of initiative in the DRC. Even the newly formed AU, created last year in South Africa, remains financially strapped, with 10 of the 53 member countries facing sanctions for not paying their dues. Another aspect was that the OAU was not prepared to alter its original position of only dealing with interstate rather than intrastate conflicts, which their conflict resolution mechanism was not designed for. The OAU opted not to comment on the situation in the DRC because so many African states had already violated their principal rule of non-intervention in other member state's domestic issues.



The position of the OAU/AU has created a vacuum that has to be filled by the sub-regional organizations in dealing with the conflicts in their respective regions. Unfortunately, the assumed responsibilities by sub-regional organizations also create their own problems. The main problem relates to the absence of a sub-regional organization in the other sub-regions of the African continent. As such, Central Africa, where the DRC is located, has no recognized organization, such as ECOWAS or SADC. The absence of such an organization creates a dilemma for any state in the sub-region when it seeks assistance from other states because of the blocked mandate to interfere in other's domestic issues. Since the beginning of the 1990s, only the sub-regional organizations have clearly been authorized to approve a mandate to respond to a request from the leaders of conflict-ridden states. However, the position of the DRC is a bit complicated because, even though is located in Central Africa, it has been accepted as a member of the SADC since 1997 when it pledged to uphold democracy. What this ultimately means is that the only immediate organization entitled to allocate a mandate to intervene in the DRC conflict was the SADC. This leads to the question were the interventions that took place in the DRC authorized under the auspices of the SADC?

When Kabila was faced with a weakening military situation, Kabila, unlike in the period prior to his presidency, appealed to the SADC to assist of fellow member states under internal conflict or, as he put it, external threat. The exclusion of South Africa was surprising because all the presidents of other members states were invited accept for South Africa, the hegemon in the sub-region. Arguably Mugabe's actions confirmed the reports that he took the DRC's request as an opportunity to assert his leadership in the sub-region, which was vanishing and being replaced by Nelson Mandela's leadership in South Africa. However, not much came out of the summit; perhaps Mugabe was using it as a testing ground for his authority.

On August 12, 1997 the SADC Inter-State Defense and Security Committee (ISDSC) held its monthly meeting in Lusaka, but Angola, Zimbabwe, DRC, Lesotho, Seychelles and Mauritius failed to send delegates.<sup>130</sup> This was a ploy by the three states,

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid

except Lesotho and Seychelles to avoid the issue of DRC to be discussed. The absence of so many states led to putting aside the Congo issue.

Nevertheless, the following week the defense ministers of Angola, Zambia, Namibia and Zimbabwe met in Harare to agree that the Kabila's government would fully get support of the SADC to ensure its survival. Mugabe, who was then the chair of SADC, announced on behalf of the organization that it was unanimously agreed that military aid should be sent to secure Kabila's position. At the same time, the South African government denied such an agreement was made and continues to support for negotiations. This circumstance created a rift in the SADC particularly between Mugabe and Mandela, which resulted in a war of words. Nonetheless, Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia dispatched troops to DRC to help Kabila's government.

On one level, Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe's decision to intervene was a clear-cut response to Kabila's request for assistance in the face of Rwandan and Ugandan occupation of the eastern portion of his country. From an international legal standpoint, the response was legitimate, but the mandate from SADC is questionable because of Mugabe's actions of not including South Africa in the process. Nevertheless, the request was made through the regional institutional framework of the SADC, of which the DRC is a member, but SADC as an organization did not officially approved the intervention. A collective security charter states that members will come to the assistance of any other member in the event of an invasion.

However, the justifications the three troop-contributing countries offered for their actions were unfounded. They initially explained that their intervention had been based on an organizational decision. The sub-regional organization, however, was not operational and not involved in the peace negotiations. Mugabe as the chair of SADC attempted to take a decision on the organ's behalf, whereas, the other two states claimed that the ISDSC decision authorized their intervention. Nonetheless, the ISDSC did not have a mandate to make decisions. Even if the ISDSC was mandated to take decision, there were only four states present at the August 1998 meeting from which they claimed the authority derived.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Berman and Katie, pp 177-8

The fabricated legitimacy of the intervention in the DRC was also reinforced by a complete turn-around by the South African government in September 1998 at a SADC mini-summit in Durban. At this summit, the government announced that the intervention had a SADC mandate and was reasonable because the DRC had been invaded<sup>132</sup>, however the change of heart by South Africa is not a guarantee of mandate from SADC, simply because South Africa is not SADC. This explains two things about South Africa with regard to the response to DRC request. First, as a hegemon in the sub-region, South Africa avoided declaring peacemaking intervention in the DRC because of its fear of being expected to contribute a significant portion of its resources as opposed to other states. This was particularly true since it was Mandela who insisted that DRC become a SADC member. The military of South Africa was still through the process of integrating and thus it was not prepared to deploy. Second, South Africa might have anticipated the instability brooding in Lesotho and knew that it may have to intervene militarily at some stage, hence the turnaround on the issue of the DRC. However, the divisions within the SADC, and Mugabe's isolation of South Africa and using his leadership role to form an alliance to intervene in the DRC exemplify the absence of a sub-regional organization in Central Africa as well as the struggle for the right to be the voice of SADC and the influence in the regions of central and southern Africa. Probably, Mugabe knew that South Africa's position in the sub-region as a hegemon might threaten his intentions in the DRC and acted as one himself before it was too late.

The justification for SADC involvement in the crisis of the DRC was complicated by the divisions that ensued between South Africa and the states on the side of Zimbabwe's justification, which Zimbabwe lacked the hegemonic capacity to smooth over. The South Africa's lack of interest, which was clearly a hegemon in the sub-region, encouraged other states to rush in and protect their interest in the DRC. The SADC organ despite the South African turn-around maneuver to support Mugabe's claims did not mandate the intervention in DRC. Thus, the globalist hypothesis based on the element of international law was not given any consideration because of the position a sub-regional organization found itself in.

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid, p 78

As for the regional organization, the OAU did not even try to comment on the interventions in the DRC, because it was not sure of its position regarding actions from several of its member states. On the international level, the UN firstly implicitly supported the interventions of overthrowing Mobutu, but later condemned the actions of all the states that intervened when Kabila was in power.

#### **E. MORAL DILEMMA**

The situation in the Great Lakes region has long been dominated by brutal killings and fighting within the member states territories, which have a tendency to spillover in the domestic realm of other neighbors. The conflict situation in Burundi, Rwanda, DRC, Uganda and Congo-Brazzaville as well as other surrounding states like Angola and Tanzania is dominated by ethnic rivalry between the Tutsi and Hutu communities that are located in most all the states in the sub-region. In the genocide committed in Rwanda in 1994, more than a million civilians were massacred ruthlessly by the Hutu rebels because of their ethnic background. This carnage demonstrated to the international community and the African organizations the lethality of the conflicts in this sub-region, which also result in a huge flow of refugees to scatter allover the sub-region. The refugee problem increased but it also the tendency of having young men and boys being used to sustain the rebel force either voluntarily or coercively.

Despite the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the less well publicized carnage in Burundi, the record clearly demonstrated that the regional body (OAU) and some governments were not eager to become involved in the central African region. An exception is those governments of countries who saw their security threatened by rebel groupings challenging their political positions. The main concern of all the states that intervened in the DRC was the fear of rebel formations in their territory challenging their political positions and their personal interests. These interests overrode the moral concern of humanitarian issues, such as refugees, starvation and murder taking place in the sub-region. These elements of international morality were ignored by all the states involved when intervening. Clearly, the SADC did not have procedures that focused either the short-term or long-term solution to humanitarian disasters even though such goals are rhetorically referred to in the SADC charter.

Since 1996, about 700.000 refugees are dispersed all over the sub-region with Tanzania absorbing a huge chunk of the figure. About 400.000 refugees are “unaccounted for.”<sup>133</sup> This is an amazing figure particularly after the 1997 overthrow of Mobutu who was seen as an instigator of the instability in the sub-region and the welcome leadership changes in states like Rwanda, Uganda, and DRC and to some extent Burundi as a breath of fresh-air blowing in the Great Lakes region.

What was deliberately ignored by those who decided to intervene in the DRC was the report from Amnesty International in the wake of Kabila’s victorious march to Kinshasa in 1997 that “there is a mounting evidence that the AFDL has carried out a deliberate campaign of arbitrary killings and attacks of refugees who have refused or been too afraid to go back to Rwanda...particularly males of fighting age.”<sup>134</sup> The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights reported that the rebels and AFDL were responsible for “serious violations of the right to life” and called for punishment against those responsible.<sup>135</sup> This indicates is that some of the unaccounted refugees were slaughtered because of Kabila’s action of barring a further independent investigation by the UN about the missing refugees.

The issue of humanitarian concern and the refugee problem was never mentioned by the states that intervened in the DRC as the factors that led to their decision to intervene militarily. The primary concerns of most states that intervened in the DRC were a mixture of national security concerns and personal interests. In the case of Zimbabwe and Namibia the fear of refugees spilling over in their state would have been a moot point because of their distance in relation to the DRC location. In summary, the element of morality was never featured as a factor that prompted all the states to intervene in the DRC, even rhetorically. Thus a globalist hypothesis drawn from the morality element that sub-regional peacemaking intervention is likely with a humanitarian carnage proved not to be the issue of the DRC conflict, but motivated by parochial and self-regarding interests.

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<sup>133</sup> Lemarchand, R, “Patterns of State Collapse and Reconstruction in Central Africa: Reflections on the Crisis in the Great Lakes”, *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol 1, No 3 (September, 1997)

<sup>134</sup> Amnesty International, “Country Report” (March 1997), [<http://www.amnesty.org>]

<sup>135</sup> Garreton, R., “Report of the Mission Carried Out at the Request of the High Commissioner for Human Rights” [[http://www.reliefweb.int/emergenc/greatlak/source/-un\\_srhz/reports/020497.html](http://www.reliefweb.int/emergenc/greatlak/source/-un_srhz/reports/020497.html)], p 124

## **F. CONCLUSION**

The involvement of various states in the DRC conflict, mainly influenced by parochial national self-regarding and personal interests, overshadowed any claim of conducting peacemaking intervention. The absence of a clear-cut hegemon in the Central African region encouraged numerous states to intervene in the sub-region, claiming to act on behalf of a democratically elected government of Kabila and SADC interests of stability and peace. Also, the initial support from the international community when Kabila ousted Mobutu from power set in motion the precedent that intervention in DRC is acceptable as long as it can be justified by a claim of some sort. Judging from the events in the case study, the realist hypothesis that sub-regional peacemaking intervention is more likely when a hegemonic power is economically formidable with its position being acknowledged by other states in the region, whether explicitly or implicitly, is transformed. What this signifies is that the absence of a clear-cut hegemon in the sub-region, meaning that intervention can take place in the sub-region even if a hegemon is not interested.

However, this transformation is not radical since clearly states that decided to intervene in the DRC calculated their position in relation to their opponents. A second realist hypothesis that sub-regional peacemaking is more likely when the interests of the hegemon are at stake seems to hold because South Africa refrained from involvement. In the absence of a sub-regional organization and a hegemonic state in the Central African sub-region any intervention became a pure form of military intervention.

Kabila's request for assistance from SADC was legal according to its treaty, but the response highlighted the deep division among the member states in the sub-region. At that time South Africa was a newly member of SADC and its position was challenged by Zimbabwean government because of their stakes in the DRC. The other point is that South Africa as a hegemon was not fully interested in sending its military to the DRC which in itself explain the position of DRC outside the proper sub-region were South Africa is deemed to be dominant. The initial objection of South Africa to Mogabe's claim that the intervention in the DRC was granted by SADC and that a sudden change of

heart still does not grant a mandate from SADC to the interventions in the DRC. As for the globalists' hypothesis that sub-regional peacemaking is more likely when the sub-regional organizations assess the conflict as transcending sovereignty claims and leads to unacceptable humanitarian sufferings, which cannot be sustained because of SADC divisions on the crisis in DRC. As for the other globalist's hypothesis, there was no indication from SADC in the case of the crisis in the DRC that intervention was caused by the concern of humanitarian carnage. In conclusion, it is clearly that an element of personal interest and self-regarding interest played an enormous role in the interventions in DRC crisis.

## **V. SOUTHERN AFRICAN PEACEMAKING MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE 1990S: THE CASE OF THE SADC IN LESOTHO**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will discuss the Southern African Development Community (SADC) peacemaking military intervention in Lesotho in relation to the position of South Africa as a sub-regional hegemon. The aim is to determine whether this operation was mandated by SADC or it was solely a result of South Africa's concern with either its position in the sub-region or its parochial interests in Lesotho. This chapter starts by briefly tracing the origin of SADC, the aim being to explain how South Africa came to be a member state. The rest of the chapter will discuss events from the origin of the conflict in Lesotho following the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter II.

In 1980, nine states in Southern Africa formed the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC). The nine founding members were Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The membership eventually grew to ten with the inclusion of Namibia in 1990 after its independence from the then white dominated South African regime. The primary aim of the SADCC was to establish economic viability by increasing cooperation among member states. This was particularly directed to some extent to the South African white regime, which dominated the sub-region economically, thus fostering dependence of other states on its capability.<sup>136</sup>

SADCC was basically a loose cooperative framework rather than a formal sub-regional entity, as there was no treaty establishing the organization or governing the activities of its members. However, in July 1981, a Memorandum of Understanding on the institutions of SADCC was completed.<sup>137</sup> The absence of official institutions automatically meant that each member state was responsible for a particular aspect of

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<sup>136</sup> Legum, C. (ed.), *African Contemporary Record*, Vol. 13, 1980-81, pp c31-35

<sup>137</sup> Cilliers, J., "Building Security in Southern Africa: An Update on the Evolving Architecture" *ISS Monograph*, 1995, p 65



SADCC's program.<sup>138</sup> The rationale underlying this informal arrangement was that it did not encroach upon member states' sovereignty and thus endeavored to facilitate cooperation among countries with different ideologies and development priorities.<sup>139</sup> The shortcoming of SADCC was that its original intention of reducing economic dependence on South Africa failed dismally because of its unstructured and informal operations. Nevertheless, the organization managed to build solidarity among its members and also mobilized significant international donor support for its project.<sup>140</sup> However, Pretoria continued exerts a powerful economic grip in the sub-region. The SADCC report of 1985 stated that contrary to expectations countries in the sub-region were more reliant upon South Africa as a trading partner more than before the organization was formed.<sup>141</sup>

As a result of the failures of the SADCC, the Council of Ministers met in January 1992 and approved a proposal to transform the organization into a fully integrated economic community, known as the SADC.<sup>142</sup> Subsequently, South Africa was welcomed as a member in 1994 after the first democratically elected regime was established and was followed by Mauritius in August 1995, as well as the DRC and Seychelles in September 1997.

Although the creation of the SADC was primarily for economic cooperation and independence, "peace and security concerns were nevertheless evident."<sup>143</sup> This can be seen in the declaration by heads of states when addressing the issue of establishing a formal security structure:

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<sup>138</sup> Ohlson, T., "Strategic Confrontation versus Economic Survival," in Francis M. Deng and William Zartman (eds), *Conflict Resolution in Africa* (Brookings Institution Press, 1991), p 241

<sup>139</sup> Meyns, P., "Time to Decide: Rethinking the Institutional Framework of Regional Co-operation in Southern Africa," in Spanger Hans-Joachim and Vale Peter (eds), *Bridges to the Future: Prospects for Peace and Security in Southern Africa* (Boulder, Westview Press, 1995), p 41. See also Green, R. H. "SADCC versus South Africa: Turning of the Tide?," in Collin Legum (ed) op cit, p a31

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, p 41

<sup>141</sup> "Southern African Development Community-SADC", p 133

<sup>142</sup> Meyns, pp 40-1

<sup>143</sup> Berman, E. G. and Sams, K. E., "Peacekeeping in Africa: Capabilities and Culpabilities" *United Nations Publication* ( UNDIR, 2000), p 159

Good and strengthened political relations among the countries of the region, and peace and mutual security, are critical components of the total environment for regional cooperation and integration. The region needs, therefore, to establish a framework and mechanisms to strengthen regional solidarity, and provide for mutual peace and security.<sup>144</sup>

Also article 4 of the SADC treaty identifies “solidarity, peace and security” as one of the principles that should guide the actions of SADC members.<sup>145</sup> Several conflict resolution mechanisms were also established such as the Organ for Politics, Defense and Security and Inter State Defense Security Council (ISDSC), but were never fully developed and equipped to deal with intrastate conflict in the sub-region. The effectiveness of these institutions will be the focus when assessing the SADC peacemaking military intervention in Lesotho.

## **B. BRIEF BACKGROUND ON THE CONFLICT AND DECISION TO INTERVENE**

Lesotho is one of the smaller countries in Africa, completely surrounded by South Africa in all of its borders. It has a population of about ....Due to Lesotho’s proximity to South Africa, it was always too vulnerable politically and economically to criticize apartheid government overtly.<sup>146</sup> Lesotho played a major role during the struggle against apartheid, for example, harboring South African exiles, most of whom received higher education and military training there. The country is also economically dependent on South Africa. A substantial percentage of the Basotho form South African workforce and both countries use the same monetary system. In addition, Sesotho, which is the language of Lesotho, is one of the major and official languages of South Africa, and the people in both countries have families on either side of the border.<sup>147</sup> In a rhetorical expression, Lesotho can be viewed to be part of South Africa even though it has been granted sovereign independence by the international community.

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<sup>144</sup> “Towards the Southern African Development Community,” *A Declaration by Heads of State and Government of Southern African States*, (August 17, 1992)

<sup>145</sup> Article 4, *Treaty of SADC*, p 124

<sup>146</sup> Thompson, C. B., “Regional Challenges to Globalization: Perspectives from Southern Africa” *New Political Economy* (Abingdon, March 2000), p 4

<sup>147</sup> Thatela, P., “Critique Discourses and Ideology in Newspaper Reports: A Discourse and Ideology in Newspaper Reports: A Discourse Analysis of the South African Press on the 1998 SADC’s Military Intervention in Lesotho”, *Discourse and Society*, 12 (3) (Sage Publications, 2001), p 356

The conflict in Lesotho was the result of domestic political disagreements about the outcome of elections. This problem can be traced from 1994 when the countries from SADC undertook diplomatic efforts to resolve crisis in Lesotho. Apparently the SADC initiatives were drawn by the tension between the then democratically-elected Prime Minister, Ntsu Mokhehle and the Kingdom's monarch, King Letsie III, which had been steadily rising since 1993. In January 1994, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe formed a task force to find a peaceful solution to the dispute.<sup>148</sup> By then South Africa was not an official member of the SADC but was included as part of the mediation team.<sup>149</sup> However, despite their efforts the situation was not resolved, because a royal coup was attempted by Mokhehle which was strongly condemned by SADC. This nearly resulted in military intervention, but intervention was stopped by the deadline date of September 2, 1994 when Mokhehle and Letsie agreed to restore the monarchy.

The pace of proposed intervention in Lesotho was slow because of the SADC contemplation of the cost and resources needed to mount such operations and that South Africa played along with SADC's suggestion because it was not yet an official member state. Going alone to secure its parochial interest would have destroyed its chances to become a member because would then be viewed by other member states as not being different to the white apartheid regime which forcefully dominated the frontline states for a long period. The speed and duration of mediation changed when South Africa intervened in Lesotho in 1998. This will be an indication of the hegemon's ability to launch peacemaking intervention irrespective of sub-regional organization assistance except for a needed authorization which was obtained after the action has been taken.

The 1994 solutions were, short-lived and in 1998 a conflict ensued in Lesotho primarily from the dissatisfaction of the political opposition parties who demanded that King Letsie III use his powers to dissolve the Parliament, since they believed that its members had been unfairly elected.<sup>150</sup> The protest led some members of Lesotho

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<sup>148</sup> Seery, B., "Africa's Reluctant New Policeman Twirls His Truncheon: The Lesotho Experience and South Africa's Role in Peacekeeping," in Mark Shaw and Jakkie Cilliers (eds), *South Africa and Peacekeeping in Africa*, Vol 1, (Halfway House: Institute for Defense Policy, 1995), p 93

<sup>149</sup> Evans, L. H., "Preventative Diplomacy in Lesotho and Mozambique," Jakkie Cilliers and Greg Mills (eds), *Peacekeeping in Africa*, Vol 2 (Halfway-House, Institute for Defense Policy, 1996), p 188

<sup>150</sup> "Lesotho: Sad Aftermath," *The Economist* (October, 1998), p 47. See also *Sowetan* (Johannesburg, September 22, 1998)

Defense Force (LDF) to seize arms and ammunition and expel or imprison their commanding officers.<sup>151</sup> Government vehicles were hijacked, the broadcasting station was closed, the Prime Minister and other Ministers were virtually held hostage and the Lesotho police lost control of the situation.<sup>152</sup>

On August 21, SADC established a committee of experts to investigate the allegations of electoral fraud in an attempt to quell the growing crisis. Fearing a further breakdown of law and order, Prime Minister Mosisili, who replaced Mokhehle as the leader of the ruling Liberal Congress for Democracy party (LDC), requested SADC assistance<sup>153</sup> in the form a peacemaking military intervention in support of the government. Apparently, this request was came in response to actions by junior military officers, who placed the Prime Minister under house arrest and effectively removed senior military officers thought to be loyal to the ruling LDC.

On September 22, 1998, South African troops crossed into Lesotho in the early morning hours, followed later by troops from Botswana. The intervention resulted in the deployment of South African troops for a period of six months. It was followed by the withdrawal in 1999 after the government of LDC was restored to power, on conditions that a new election would be held within eighteen months, which was scheduled for April 2000.<sup>154</sup> This effort emanated from a joint force established between Botswana and South Africa in preparation for a possible military operation.<sup>155</sup> The reason why South Africa launched the intervention alone will be discussed in relation the hegemonic role it played in the sub-region.

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<sup>151</sup> Neethling, T., "Southern African Military Intervention in the 1990s: The Case of SADC in Lesotho" in du Plessis and Hough op cit, p 287

<sup>152</sup> Sutton-Pryce, T., Baudin, C., and Allie, N., "Baptism of Fire for SANDF", *South African Soldier* (November, 1998), p 26

<sup>153</sup> Malan, M., "Regional Power Politics Under Cover of SADC-Running Amok with a Mythical Organ," *Institute of Strategic Studies Paper*, No 35 (October 1998), p 7

<sup>154</sup> Southall, R and Fox, R., "Lesotho's General Elections of 1998: Rigged or De Rigueur?" *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 37, 4, (1999), p 669

<sup>155</sup> The Botswana and South African Combined Task Force was formed on September 16, 1998. "Bulletin No. 96/98," *South African Department of Defense* (December 4, 1998), [<http://www.mil.za/SANDF/>>>]

### **C. SOUTH AFRICAN HEGEMONIC ROLE AND THE DECISION TO INTERVENE**

The South African hegemonic role in the peacemaking intervention in Lesotho became evident when it instructed the SADC to establish a committee of experts to investigate the allegations of election fraud professed by the political opposition party against the LCD. The Langa Commission was established by the SADC, but it was chaired by South Africa and dominated by South Africans.<sup>156</sup> It was reported that the commission did find some irregularities in the counting process in the election but decided not to nullify the elections<sup>157</sup> on the instruction of the South African government. There are two possible reasons as to why South African government took this action. Firstly, South Africa did not want to set a precedent in the sub-region for other groups in other states to oppose democratic elections hoping they would be nullified upon their request to the SADC, because in that case South Africa have to shoulder the cost of future intervention because of its hegemonic status. . In addition, South Africa was also just beyond their first democratically elected government and the feared that if it allowed such action to prevail South Africa might have to deal with a similar problem in the future. Secondly, South African government realized that the conflict in Lesotho was an opportune moment to establish its hegemonic role because of the affordability of the operation due to factors such as proximity and resources as compared to conflicts such as the DRC, Angola and Burundi. South Africa's position in the previous conflicts was criticized by the international community as well as fellow African states as being reluctant to exercise its legitimate right as a formidable hegemon. The excuses of being busy with integration and transformation of its armed forces were becoming monotonous and out-dated, and something needed to be done to uphold South Africa's prestige in the international system.

The other strong indicator of South African hegemony is how the request from Lesotho was processed. The Lesotho Prime Minister opted to route his request for

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<sup>156</sup> The SADC committee of experts was chaired by South African judge Pius Langa.

<sup>157</sup> William Boot claims that the Langa Commission's final report was drafted for political reasons and... "sections which questioned the legitimacy of the LCD government and called for re-elections under an interim government of national unity were excised."

assistance through South Africa instead of the SADC organ mechanisms. These actions from the Lesotho leader indicate at least two factors that reinforce the hegemonic power of South Africa in the sub-region. Firstly, the leader of the Lesotho realized that his request can only become practical only through a hegemon's influence in the SADC and also that it made sense to ask help from South Africa because of the proximity element, which ultimately leads to the other factor. Secondly, Lesotho leader was not interested in inviting SADC as an organ but only the South African state, which is one reason why South Africa went ahead without a mandate from SADC.

The decision to launch peacemaking intervention in Lesotho alone before Botswana force joined with them was suspect because they had prior trained jointly a training exercise in preparation for a possible military operation. Even though it was said to be a combined task force, consisting of the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) and Botswana Defense Force (BDF), "it was before nightfall on September 22 that approximately 200 Batswana troops arrived in Maseru."<sup>158</sup> This action by South Africa can be attributed to both its ability as a hegemon in the sub-region and its desire to show it could contribute effectively to the seeking of peace and stability in the African continent. On the issue of hegemonic ability, a solitary intervention in Lesotho proved that South Africa did not need any assistance from fellow SADC member states, but welcomed their presence. On the issue of prestige, the solo action also was to prove that South Africa was ready to contribute effectively and speedily in dire situations that require its support.

The realist hypothesis that peacemaking intervention in the sub-region is likely when a hegemon's power and economic position is acknowledged by other states in the region became a reality in the crisis of Lesotho. The request procedure opted by Lesotho's Prime Minister was an illegitimate action but nevertheless was an indication that this leader acknowledged and accepted South African's leadership in the sub-region. There was no indication of other states in the sub-region opposing the action taken by South Africa in Lesotho. Also by the time the Botswana convoy arrived they surely must

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<sup>158</sup> Neethling, p 287

have been relived that the situation was taken care-off by South Africa, because of the poor equipment they had when arriving in Lesotho.

#### **D. THE ROLE OF INTEREST IN THE DECISION TO INTERVENE**

When the political transformation took place in South Africa during 1994, one of the issues that were placed high on the political agenda was water.<sup>159</sup> In Lesotho, South Africa has invested in a huge project of dam building that supports the major industrial areas in the Gauteng Province, which is an economic hub of the state. Also the water from the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, which consists of a number of dams already build, such as Katse and Mogale dams, is used to support the population in the upper parts of the Highveld region. No wonder, therefore, that the peacemaking intervention launched by South African troops under the auspices of SADC is associated in South African with efforts to protect certain of its national interests such as the water scheme project.

Another consideration associated with interests is the argument that the Lesotho government had been democratically elected despite certain irregularities during the election process, and it was increasingly required of South Africa to play a role in regional peacemaking efforts, which serve two important tasks for South Africa. The first is that South Africa, as a newly established democracy itself, should show its support for democratically elected governments so as to avoid small election irregularities becoming a route for ambitious elements in the military forces in the sub-region to pursue their political aspiration, particularly since South African armed forces are still in an infancy stage of getting integrated. The second task reflected in South Africa's policy was a commitment to development in the region.<sup>160</sup>

Clearly in this case self-regarding interest became a great motivator for the decision to intervene in the Lesotho crisis. What seems to add support for this observation is that this was the first peacemaking operation in which South Africa had to

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<sup>159</sup> Turton, A. R., "Water Demand Management (WDM): A Case Study from South Africa" *MEWREW Occasional Paper No 4*. Presented to the Water Issues Study Group by the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) on January 18, 1999, p 6

<sup>160</sup> Republic of South Africa, Department of Defense, *Bulletin*, No 57/98, September 22, 1998 and *The Star* (Johannesburg)

prove its dominance in the sub-region, because if it opted for other measures as in the case of Burundi and DRC, the message could have been clear that it was not as strong as was anticipated by the outside world. The realist hypothesis that peacemaking intervention is more likely when the interests of the hegemon are at stake fits the Lesotho case well.

In the case of personal interest, there was no indication of direct personal relationship between Mandela and Mosisili. The point of this argument is based on the recent establishment of a South African democratic government, which was only four years old. It could not have afforded Mandela enough opportunity to already build a close relationship with either of the leaders in the sub-region. Second, even the water was not an enough justification on its own to have motivated South Africa's intervention in Lesotho, all other arguments such as maintenance of democracy and the fear of the conflict spilling over the borders affecting parts of South Africa, still constitutes elements of self-regarding interests on the part of South Africa.

Surely South Africa has a collective interest in the sub-region because of its political and economic dependence on the stability of the sub-region. Any instability in the sub-region will jeopardize South Africa's economic success as well as other member states. Thus, it was imperative that South Africa be prepared to offer any kind of assistance to maintain harmony in the sub-region. The benefit of peace and stability in the sub-region not only enhance the SADC states directly, but more towards South African position. However, collective interest was not enough to have caused the intervention in Lesotho, particularly at the speed and magnitude carried by the South African government.

#### **E. QUESTION OF MANDATE**

The decision to initiate peacemaking intervention in Lesotho was made without explicit SADC authorization. Accordingly, it becomes hard to imagine how South African intervention in Lesotho, which resembled a military invasion and occupation of the Kingdom of Lesotho, could have followed a SADC mandate for peacemaking.<sup>161</sup> In

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<sup>161</sup> Malan, p 8



fact, a requested mandate was granted but only after the intervention took place. Also at the very same time, South African government had been against the intervention of Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia in the DRC, and reported that the decision taken by Mugabe and his colleagues was not on behalf of the SADC. A statement made by the late Parks Mankahlana, who was Mandela's spokesperson, said directly, "there is no way that the people who met at Victoria Falls and Harare can have met under the auspices of the SADC."<sup>162</sup> The sudden change of heart by the South African government on the intervention in the DRC, and leading it to declare that for the three states had intervened on behalf of the SADC shows that it was busy paving way for the invasion of Lesotho. However, the South African government maintained that the military intervention did not constitute an invasion<sup>163</sup> while the SANDF maintained that there was not only a proper SADC mandate, but also a moral obligation on South Africa and Botswana to intervene in Lesotho.<sup>164</sup> Furthermore the South African Minister of Safety and Security reportedly confirmed that SADC had authorized a possible military intervention in the event of a coup in Lesotho,<sup>165</sup> which was vehemently denied by SADC structures. At the SADC summit in Grand Baie the week before the intervention, SADC Heads of State had merely "expressed concern at the civil disturbances and loss of life following the recent elections" and welcomed the mediation initiatives led by the South African government,<sup>166</sup> not approving peacemaking intervention as reported by South African officials.

Another argument presented as a legal mandate was based on the request sent by Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili. It is stated that the decision was based on and justified by the fact that the SADC had been directly approached by the leader of Lesotho.<sup>167</sup> Although Mosisili was a head of government, the request did not contain the approval of

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<sup>162</sup> "The Last Days of Laurent Kabila?" *Mail & Guardian*, August 21, 1998, [<http://www.mg.za>]

<sup>163</sup> *The Star*, (Johannesburg, October 6, 1998)

<sup>164</sup> "SA, Botswana Troops Move into Lesotho," *Chief of Joint Operation, SANDF*, September 22, 1998 [<http://www.mil.za/SANDF>]

<sup>165</sup> Malan, p 7

<sup>166</sup> UN Documents S/1998/915, Annex I, para. 17

<sup>167</sup> Malan, p 8

King Letsie who was a nominal head of State, as required by the constitution.<sup>168</sup> Apparently, the request also was not sent directly to SADC organs but was sent at various states such as Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, but only Botswana and South Africa were practically able to respond. In the case of South Africa it managed to edge out Botswana because its resources and manpower enabled it to move in fast, especially given its closer proximity as compared to Botswana.

The mandate from the SADC was obtained afterwards by the South Africans, which indicates that a sub-regional organization is only effective when a hegemon wants to utilize it for its own purposes, whether before the operation or afterwards. The SADC approved the actions of South Africa in Lesotho without even questioning their actions of ignoring the mechanisms setup by the sub-regional organization. The OAU and the UN opted to let the “sleeping dogs lie”, because no comments were attributed to them in relation to the intervention in Lesotho.

The globalist hypothesis that peacemaking intervention is likely when a sub-regional organization believes the conflict in a particular state transcends sovereignty claims and is leading to unacceptable humanitarian sufferings was proven not be the case in the Lesotho crisis. South Africa did not bother to consult the SADC regarding its intentions in Lesotho.

## **F. QUESTION OF MORALITY**

The moral justification was raised neither by the SADC organization nor South African government in influencing the decision to intervene militarily in Lesotho conflict. It is however mentioned in passing by some official documents of South Africa. Perhaps, South Africa worried about the number of the refugees it could have been absorbed by them in case the conflict escalated to the worst stage. This would not have been surprising because Lesotho is surrounded by the boundaries of South Africa. In fact South Africa provides employment to the bulk of Lesotho’s citizens in both its industrial and agricultural sectors.

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<sup>168</sup> Barrell, H., “We Have Some Serious Explaining to Do,” *Mail & Guardian*, September 22, 1998, [<http://www.mil.za>]

It is also reported that the conflict in Lesotho resulted in a number of deaths accompanied by destruction of property and looting. The moral issues such a huge flow of refugees, human rights abuses, killings and genocide were not reported by the public media, which was largely allowed to cover the entire combined operation in Lesotho, known as Operation Boelas. In this case, there is no indication of the element of morality having contributed to the South African decision to intervene in Lesotho.

## **G. CONCLUSION**

It is clear from this case study that a peacemaking intervention in Lesotho was initiated and conducted primarily by a sub-regional hegemon in its sub-region. It was the South African government that received a request from Lesotho; it was South Africa that initiated the possibility of mounting peacemaking intervention in Lesotho; it was South African troops that single-handedly intervened in without a proper mandate from the SADC. Clearly this was the case where the realist hypotheses of power and interests dominated as opposed to globalist perspective. The impetus for South African intervention in Lesotho arose from threats to national security and other interests propelled by the ability to launch such an operation because of the command of resources that are otherwise not possessed by the SADC as a sub-regional organization. This case has made it clear that if a sub-regional hegemon's interest is threatened it will not seek a mandate before it mounts intervention in a conflict-ridden state and will only request it after the fact. This indicated that even if the hegemon is capable to launch peacemaking intervention in the sub-region with a prior or proper mandate from the sub-regional organization, it is still imperative that such organization give the approval for any action within its geographic location because this signifies the common consensus among all member states.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

### **A. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE CASES AND THEIR FUTURE IMPACT ON THE CONTINENT**

#### **1. Introduction**

It is clear from the case studies that African societies are in crisis. The crisis involves grave problems of human survival and a scramble for resources by those who wield power. According to many observers, crisis in Africa has become a state of existence.<sup>169</sup> Others even maintain that the crisis in Africa is so extensive that it threatens to dissolve the glue that somehow still holds various societies together.

Since the beginning of the 1990s there has been a growing inclination of the African state to intervene militarily in the domestic affairs of neighboring and far-off countries. Whether states intervene individually or regionally, leaders tend to justify their actions with varied arguments, ranging from a need to ensure stability or to alleviate suffering to a need to restore democracy, while avoiding any language that indicates self-regarding interest. However, the successful launching of peacemaking intervention seems to depend on the ability and the willingness of hegemonic states in the sub-region to voluntarily commit resources. Decisions to intervene depend on a number of factors, such as power relations within the sub-region, the kinds of interests involved, the issue of international law and the depth of moral obligation possessed by the hegemonic state.

#### **2. Power Relations**

The element of power plays a significant part in the decision of a hegemon to launch peacemaking military intervention. Power involves the possession of formidable economic and military resources by a sub-regional hegemon, resources which are explicitly acknowledged by other member states. In addition, the resources possessed by the hegemon must be able to influence other states in the sub-region and its role must be accepted as coming from an acknowledged leader of the sub-region. What was similar in the case of Nigeria and South Africa, but different for those states that intervened in the

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<sup>169</sup> Mbembe, A and Roitman, J., "Figures of the Subject in Times of Crisis", *Public Culture*, 7, 1995, pp 323-352

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), particularly Zimbabwe, was the ability of the sub-regional hegemons to use their resources effectively to attract other states to side with their proposals.

In the West African case, Nigeria as a hegemon possessed all the required resources, which made it possible to undertake peacemaking intervention in Liberia. However, since its leadership was not totally acknowledged by all the member states in the sub-region, the challenge for Nigeria was to devise a means of ensuring its dominance over the other states without creating fear from being perceived as a coercive hegemonic power. The cost that Nigeria incurred from the operation indicated that no state in the sub-region would have been able to sustain such costs. The possession of the resources enabled Nigeria to pursue its intended objectives by luring other smaller states in the sub-region, like Togo and Gambia. Nigeria was able to attract support from these states because it indicated its willingness to shoulder the costs for the operation including those that might be incurred by other states. The willingness of Nigeria to contribute almost ninety percent of the manpower and equipment indicated its hegemonic capability to other states.

The opposition of Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso to ECOMOG revealed how a Liberian war could have easily polarized ECOWAS states and spoiled the larger objectives of sub-regional integration. The disagreement over the Liberian operation was, in fact, a manifestation of fundamental problems. The primary problem was fear of Nigeria's hegemonic dominance by other states, particularly the Francophone countries that always suspected Nigeria's zeal for dominance in the sub-region. Nevertheless, Nigeria's overwhelming power and possession of resources enabled it to transcend such opposition from Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. Nigeria's ability to proceed with its intentions even with opposition from other states in the sub-region indicates that a hegemon with formidable resources can easily pursue its objectives regardless of obtaining consensus from other states. Thus, peacemaking intervention has a high likelihood of taking place provided the state, which is a hegemon, is able to utilize its resources and spread its influence over other states in the sub-region.

In Central Africa, the unwillingness of the hegemon, South Africa, to intervene in the DRC allowed the other states to jump on the opportunity to pursue their parochial interest. The willingness of a sub-regional hegemon to take a lead in launching peacemaking intervention enables it to curtail divergent parochial interests from smaller states in the sub-region because it is able to provide a clear overall aim of intervening in the conflict ridden state. In addition, other states in the sub-region are expected to pursue parochial interests because they do not have a lot of resources to utilize as compared to those possessed by the hegemon. Thus, for whatever reason their decision to intervene will be limited to the immediate self-regarding interest.

Zimbabwe's decision to isolate South Africa on the issue of the DRC did not help Zimbabwe much because Zimbabwe was not able to co-opt a significant number of states from the SADC to go along with its intentions ambition. The reason why Zimbabwe was not able to co-opt other states was its inability to act as a natural hegemon like Nigeria. Unlike Nigeria, which gained support from other states by providing for their necessities, Zimbabwe does not have enough resources to distribute.

The unwillingness of South Africa to play its natural role in the DRC is attributed to the development of a complicated situation in the DRC. As a hegemon, South Africa should have realized that a peacemaking mission in the DRC was going to be dominated by the other states' pursuit of their parochial interests. South Africa should have realized it was being isolated when it was not invited to the SADC meeting organized by Mugabe. Although South Africa objected to the declaration of the interventions in the DRC as mandated by the SADC, it did not act in a manner expected of hegemon; for example it immediately should have used its power to form a coalition with other member states in the sub-region in order to rectify the situation in the DRC. In West Africa, Nigeria acted differently when it realized that the support of Taylor by Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso was going to cause damage to its intentions in the sub-region. It immediately proposed an SMC structure so as to set up an ECOMOG force to undermine the support of the other two states.

In Southern Africa, the size of South African economic and political dominance in the SADC as compared to other states meant it had few problems in its decision to

intervene in Lesotho. In this case South Africa indicated that a hegemonic state of its magnitude does not require any assistance from other member states to launch peacemaking intervention. Also in this case, South Africa did not experience the Nigerian situation where the other states refused to acknowledge its position as a hegemon. The SADC member states readily accept the leadership of the South African state by welcoming its effort to bring peace and stability in the sub-region because they realized that being on the side of the hegemon benefited every state in the sub-region. This is unlike the situation in ECOWAS where the francophone states still rely on France to provide for their needs with grants and extensive loans. The non-reliance of other states on the economic interdependence in the sub-region creates a problem for a hegemonic state to establish its dominance because the hegemon gives little justification to other states when attempting to pursue its objectives.

The proposals for peacemaking intervention brought to the forefront the political divisions that dominated power relations in the various sub-regions of the continent. The cause of political divisions varied, ranging from the colonial past, historical animosity and the fear of weakening occupied power positions. In West Africa, divisions arose played between the Anglophone and Francophone states. What actually aligned the division to the colonial past was the difference between Nigeria, which is Anglophone, and Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, which were Francophone, on how to handle the Liberian debacle. In this case, Nigeria emerged to play a significant role in molding the differences in ECOWAS towards achieving peace in Liberia. Though some self-regarding interests were involved, these were merged with greater sub-regional interests in the course of the transformation process from an economic to a political/security organization. The Liberian crisis seems to have made member states transcend their national interests by building their common security regime, by developing norms and by practically maintaining them.

However, the Liberian experience provided a path breaking approach under Nigeria's hegemonic leadership. Nigeria was able to use its hegemonic influence to mobilize a small group of support from some member states of the ECOWAS to achieve set objectives, which would ultimately benefit the entire sub-region. In the Liberian crisis, the SMC member states provided the support needed by Nigeria to demonstrate her

hegemonic influence. This was neither a splinter action nor a coercive hegemonic approach but an effective organizing of collective action under a “sway diplomacy” exhibited by Nigerian epistemic leadership.<sup>170</sup>

In Central Africa, the divisions were mainly attributed to an attempt of other states to deliberately isolate a hegemonic state because they realized that in order to pursue their parochial interests they should avoid the power of the hegemon. Mugabe’s decision not to extend an invitation to the newly accepted hegemon, South Africa, was based on the knowledge that South Africa would thwart his intentions of proposing intervention in the DRC. Nevertheless, the disinterest of South Africa in getting involved in the DRC helped to sustain Zimbabwe’s ambitions. What happened in the DRC is absolutely attributed to the South African government’s reluctance to exercise its hegemonic role. This is an indication that whenever a state regarded as a natural hegemon neglects its duty of keeping the sub-region stable and peaceful, the other smaller states may react by protecting their interest and plundering resources from the conflict state to support their intervention efforts.

### **3. Interest**

The element of interest plays a prominent role influenced decisions by hegemons to launch peacemaking intervention in their respective sub-regions. In all the case studies, collective interest has been cited by others was the main motivation for the hegemon’s decision to perform peacemaking intervention in the sub-region. While it is true that sub-regional hegemons stand to benefit from having stability and peace in the sub-region because of the size of their socioeconomic sectors, the case studies strongly indicate that self-regarding interest is really the main motivating factor.

In its decision to intervene in Liberia, Nigeria attempted to cast its involvement in Liberia in moral terms but its primary intention was self-regarding in character. The self-regarding interest stems from Nigeria’s ambition to apply its hegemonic influence in the sub-region. Nigeria cited humanitarian carnage as its main motive for peacemaking military intervention. Nigerian President, Ibrahim Babangida, defended the Liberian operation with the following statement, which he thought was crucial to justifying intervention:

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<sup>170</sup> Yoroms and Aning, p 56



We are in Liberia because events in that country have led to the massive destruction of property and the massacre of thousands of innocent civilians. Should Nigeria and other responsible countries in the sub-region stand by and watch the whole of Liberia turned into one mass graveyard? There are those who are waiting to see the Liberian crisis as a concrete indicator of Africa in disarray and despair, purposeless and without direction or control. In Liberia we are first and foremost reflecting the love we have for our respective countries, our sub-region, Africa, the black world and mankind.<sup>171</sup>

Despite the morality language used by the Nigerian president, self-regarding interest was still a decisive determinant in launching peacemaking military intervention. The impact of the Liberian crisis on the Nigerian state was not as severe as on other states such as Cote d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone because of their proximity. What served as an indication of Nigeria's pursuit of self-regarding interest was the zealous manner in which it pushed the necessity of intervention in Liberia as opposed to other states that actually felt the impact of the conflict in Liberia. Nigeria did this simply to protect its position within the sub-region from being directly threatened. Thus, self-regarding interest remains a factor in motivating hegemons to launch peacemaking intervention.

In the south, self-regarding interest was also the main influencing factor in the decision of South Africa to intervene in Lesotho. The amount of resources invested by South Africa in Lesotho and the speed in which the intervention in Lesotho was undertaken, when compared with the conflicts of the DRC and Burundi, shows how important Lesotho was to South Africa.

In justifying the intervention in Lesotho, the South African government emphasized the fact that it was increasingly being required to play a role in regional peacekeeping. This role required South Africa to confront the military faction in Lesotho, threatening a democratically elected government; therefore South Africa's aim was to intervene with the mandate of intervening in the name of the SADC to restore stability in Lesotho. The fact that for the first time the newly elected democratic government had

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<sup>171</sup> Babangida, I., President of Nigeria, "The Imperative Features of Nigerian Foreign Policy and the Crisis in Liberia", speech at a press conference at the Dodan Barracks in Lagos (October 31, 1990)

deployed armed forces on foreign soil explains the importance of Lesotho to South Africa. Most importantly the intervention in Lesotho was highly aligned to the element of self-regarding interest.

In the case of the DRC, the three SADC states that intervened under the leadership of Zimbabwe cited the articles of the SADC, the OAU and the UN that spell out the principle of non-interference in the domestic matters of other member states without proper authorization, as the primary reason that influenced their decisions to intervene. The evidence from the case study revealed on the contrary that self-regarding and personal interests were the factors that pushed the interventions in the DRC.

The interventions in the DRC and Liberia reveal the difference between hegemonies and smaller states when considering the kinds of interests in peacemaking intervention. A sub-regional hegemon, such as Nigeria, has both self-regarding and collective interest as motivating factors to launch peacemaking intervention in the sub-region. In contrast, smaller states are overwhelmingly influenced by the protection of personal and self-regarding interests for participating in the peacemaking intervention. Surely, the differences of resource ownership contribute to these kinds of influence. The smaller states only have a limited resource capacity to sustain them in a single objective while a hegemon is able to pursue multiple objectives and, at the same time, use its resources to influence other member states to join in the effort of peacemaking.

On the other hand, as in the case of South Africa's intervention in Lesotho, a sub-regional hegemon is able to launch peacemaking intervention on its own without a need for support from other states. The securing of support from other states can be used to grant legitimacy to the intervention itself. South Africa managed to influence Botswana to go along with the decision to intervene in Lesotho, but did not bother to wait for its arrival before the actual operation.

The personal interest of leaders also played a significant role in the case studies, particularly from the Nigeria intervention in Liberia and the interventions in the DRC. In the case of Nigeria, Babangida's friendship with Doe was extensively cited as the main cause of Nigeria's enthusiasm for becoming involved in Liberia. Although enough evidence exists to establish the depth of the friendship between the two, the Nigerian

President was clearly using Doe's friendship to pursue the Nigerian strategy of entrenching hegemonic influence in the region. After realizing that the two francophone states, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, had opted to support Taylor in his efforts to take over Liberia and that the whole thing was pushed by a personal grudge, it was reasonable for Nigeria to opt to support Doe because of his position. Doe was a legitimate leader of Liberia who was recognized by the international community; therefore, Nigeria knew that supporting him was going to legitimize and justify their intentions. This calculated strategy managed to get other smaller states on the side of Nigeria while enabling it to pursue its objective with minimum hindrance.

In the DRC, of personal interest was most important in Zimbabwe's role in the intervention. The connection arose from the ownership of shares in the mining industry in the DRC by most of Mugabe's military leadership and senior government officials. Also the involvement was said to have been stimulated by the debt that Kabila owed to Zimbabwe after it assisted him in ousting Mobutu from power. The Zimbabwean government recognized that if Kabila could lose his position, the money owed to them would also disappear. Thus, the sensible path was to help sustain Kabila in power. However, a limitation in achieving this objective was that Zimbabwe did not possess enough ability to sway matters in its favor due to its lack of hegemonic status and capability in the sub-region. In its attempted isolation of South Africa, Zimbabwe used a calculated strategy of avoiding any hindrances while at the same time gaining legitimacy for the intervention.

#### **4. Mandates and Justification**

The issue of mandates from the sub-regional organizations to authorize the peacemaking interventions was also conducted differently in the three case studies. The importance of mandates in West Africa differed significantly from the manner in which it was handled in Central and Southern Africa. The way sub-regional organizations were approached was also different in all the case studies. However, the common factor among the interveners of is an attempt to seek proper mandate from sub-regional organizations either before or after intervening.

In the case of West Africa, Nigeria as a hegemon continually attempted to seek a proper mandate from ECOWAS on its intentions of intervening in Liberia. Nigeria was

aware that its position of leadership was not deeply entrenched or accepted by all the states in the sub-region. It was also aware of the historical divisions between the Anglophone and Francophone states in the sub-region. The most sensible approach from Nigeria was to pursue its objectives through the ECOWAS as a sub-regional body. This was not only going to grant a proper legitimacy to their claims to be acting for peace and stability in the sub-region, but it was also going to influence other states to follow suit and accept its leadership without much difficulty.

In the case of the interventions in the DRC, there was manipulation of the SADC's process to enable the interventions of Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia to be seen as having a SADC mandate. The Zimbabwean President, Mugabe, deliberately isolated South Africa from the SADC meetings that discussed the issue of the DRC. By that time Mugabe was the chairperson of SADC, and he thought that his position was enough to influence the decisions of other member states to support intervention in the DRC. However, Mugabe knew that only by utilizing a proper mechanism of SADC and the full participation of all member states could a proper mandate from SADC be facilitated. Mugabe never wanted to have a proper mandate from SADC because he knew that such action would jeopardize his objectives. By painting the intervention as being mandated by the SADC, as a temporary measure he facilitated his intentions without violating the clause from the UN, the OAU and the SADC, which stipulates non-interference on domestic matters of other states. The three SADC states that intervened in the DRC also justified their actions as being a counteraction from those states that invaded the DRC territory.

In the South, South Africa intervened in Lesotho without seeking a mandate from the SADC. This case indicates that when the hegemon's immediate interests are threatened by the conflict within and other state a mandate from a sub-regional organization seems not to matter since it can be obtained after the fact. These case studies illustrate both the dilemma of classifying and of justifying military interventions. In the first case study, several members of ECOWAS, under Nigeria, intervened in Liberia for apparently humanitarian reasons and undermined their own weak economies but stabilized the brutal conflicts in West Africa. In the second case study, several Central African states with totally different motives intervened in power struggles in the DRC,

put nearly unbearable pressures on their own economies and settled for a ceasefire that held the promise of peaceful developments. In the third case study, South Africa, supported by Botswana, suppressed a coup attempt in Lesotho and agreed on future democratic elections.

The African justification of intervening is reinforced by a growing international emphasis on the interdependent of societies and states. In an increasingly interdependence world, the division between what is defined as “domestic” affairs and what is defined as affairs “external” to a state is often a very thin one. The growing emphasis on globalization at the beginning of the twenty first century has internationalized the internal affairs of states even more. The review of international law implies that the important principles that guided international relations, such as sovereignty and non-interference, have been revised. The guidelines for peacemaking military intervention become exceptionally complicated when applied from these three diverse case studies to other African conflicts in general.

The September 19, 2002, crisis, which blew up Cote d’Ivoire after a failed coup, is one indication of how the sub-regional organization intends to deal with crisis in its sub-region. On December 24, 2002, ECOWAS announced the deployment of about 1,264 troops, but delayed the arrival of the first soldiers to January 03, 2003. In this case, Nigeria as a hegemon in the sub-region has two options to deal with the conflict in Cote d’Ivoire. The first option is to utilize this opportunity to entrench its hegemony by intervening at a large scale in Cote d’Ivoire and by convincing other states to become part of ECOMOG. The second option for Nigeria is to let the situation in Cote d’Ivoire deteriorate to the stage where the capacity of the state is no longer on a par with what it was beforehand. The goal of this option is based on the position of Cote d’Ivoire in relation to Nigeria’s hegemony. Cote d’Ivoire is one of the major states that objected to Nigeria’s decision to launch peacemaking intervention in Liberia and supported the Charles Taylor group. However, the SMC body established by Nigeria to deal with any future conflicts in the sub-region was not the main body that approved the decision to send troops to Cote d’Ivoire. This is a clear indication that the formation of the SMC was a strategy of Nigeria to launch the ECOMOG force in Liberia under the pretext of ECOWAS and was not for the reasons attributed to it before.

The conflict in Burundi saw an extensive involvement of South Africa with a deployment of 700 troops to monitor the democratic transition in that country. This kind of action from South Africa can be attributed to realizing its role as a hegemon in the region. The handling of the situation in the DRC resulted in a complicated situation because of South Africa's negligence of its natural role as a hegemon in the region.

Nevertheless, the tentative acceptance of some forms of interventions is still valid only in terms of international law. Peacemaking intervention missions conducted within an international legal framework and perceived as legitimate are likely to be supported by more states.<sup>172</sup> Legitimacy is heightened when peacemaking intervention is planned under the auspices of sub-regional organizations, such as ECOWAS and the SADC. Likewise, legitimacy is virtually always questioned when sub-regional security structures endorse the military intervention of individual states only after it has started. An example is when the intervention of South African armed forces in Lesotho is labeled, as sub-regional SADC venture only after a series of telephone calls had been made between some heads of state.<sup>173</sup>

The legitimacy furthermore demands authorization by the UN. In terms of article 53 in the Charter of the UN, "no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangement or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council."<sup>174</sup> However, although the interventions in the DRC and Lesotho took place without explicit and prior UN authorization, the UN seems not to be prepared to accept the responsibility of regional and sub-regional organizations for maintaining security. Because the correlated principles of sovereignty and non-intervention form the basis of contemporary international relations, peacemaking military intervention always requires justification. Of importance is that the government under attack must specifically request military intervention from the potential intervener.

At the level of intra-regional diplomacy, the divisions within the sub-regional organizations revealed how the conflicts could easily polarize states and derail the larger

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<sup>172</sup> Bir, C. "Interoperability and Intervention Operations", *The Rusi Journal* (December 19997), p 23

<sup>173</sup> Berman, E. G. and Sams, K. E., "Constructive Engagement: Western Efforts to Develop African Peacekeeping", *ISS Monograph*, No 33 (December 1998), p 9

<sup>174</sup> United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*, San Francisco, 1945

objectives of regional integration. The fact that the organizations provide a regular forum for summit diplomacy, permitting leaders to negotiate their differences directly, made it possible to get other states to support peace plans. However, it is incumbent upon the sub-regional hegemon to lure other states in following the path that will ensure peace and stability in the sub-region.

The sub-regional organizations' procedures for handling internal conflicts proved completely inadequate for the political and security decisions that were required for all the crises. Clearly, there was a need to improve the decision-making apparatus. The institutions of the sub-organizations had to be strengthened and revitalized if they were to serve the vehicles to bridge divisions and promote regional integration.

The fact that Nigeria orchestrated the formation of ECOMOG demonstrates the sub-regional hegemonic powers can use their influences in a sub-regional organization to build national coalitions in support of their particularistic objectives. The United States, a global hegemon, did that with the UN in Korea in 1950 and in the Gulf War in 1991. Geopolitically, Africa has two power centers, Nigeria and South Africa. The two power centers could become growth poles for the development of the African economy. A logical outcome of this would be the development of Nigeria and South Africa to enhance their interest and capability in continental defense and security. Only then, would the conflicts in the African continent be approached with resilience and be solved for the larger benefit of continental development.

## **5. Morality**

It is clear from the case studies that morality was used to hide the real intentions behind the decisions to intervene in the conflict states. Nigeria indicated the humanitarian carnage as their prime motivator to intervene because of the flow of refugees into other states; however, other states who experienced a large impact than Nigeria disagreed with its reason.

Since morality falls within the realm of sub-regional organizations, the hegemons and other ambitious states like Zimbabwe, as well as the suspecting ones like Ivory Coast feel not obligated to moral influence. However, all the states discovered that morality is a perfect instrument to garner support of other states in their sub-regions. Thus as a result

they tended to use moral degradation as the main factor influenced their decision to peacemaking intervention.

The situation in the DRC, there was some moral justification attributed by states to intervene, while it was clear that self-regarding interests was the primary motivating factor of intervention. The absence of South Africa as a hegemon in the DRC allowed the development of self-interest to be the prime reason used by other states to intervene, because only a hegemon possesses enough interest to cast morality as a reason to intervene.

In conclusion, the international community should support the sub-regional organizations with the proper resources needed to launch peacemaking interventions in Africa, so as to counter the sub-regional hegemon's tendency to neglect their organization mandates. Although the call by Africans to deal with their own problems in their own manner is an acceptable proposal, the need for resources still remain important and need to be contributed by those states in the northern hemisphere. A historical observation is that any conflict developing in any part of the world has a potential to destabilize the whole international system.



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